Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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CONTENTS

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab Affairs: Syria's al-Shar' Comments on Goal of Muscat Meeting *[Damascus Radio]* 1
Inter-Arab Affairs: Syria's al-Shar' Comments on Peace Process, Terrorism *[Muscat TV]* 1
Inter-Arab Affairs: Omani Minister Addresses Muscat Talks *[AFP]* 1
Inter-Arab Affairs: League Members Voice Doubts on Conflict-Prevention Plan *[AFP]* 2
Inter-Arab Affairs: Damascus Declaration Urges Iraq To Comply With UN *[AFP]* 2
Inter-Arab Affairs: 'Text' of Damascus Declaration Statement *[Muscat TV]* 3

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Leaves for Talks With Mubarak in Cairo *[Jericho VOP]* 6
Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Returns to Gaza After 'Fruitful' Talks With Mubarak *[Jericho VOP]* 6
Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat on Netanyahu's Policy, Jerusalem, Peace *[London MBC TV]* 7
Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Criticizes Netanyahu's Policies *[Jericho VOP]* 10
Palestinian Affairs: Leadership Seeking Support To Face 'Dangers' to Peace *[Jericho VOP]* . 10
Palestinian Affairs: Awqaf Minister Denounces Plan To Close Jerusalem Offices *[Jericho VOP]* 10
Palestinian Affairs: Netanyahu's 'Battle' Over Jerusalem Aims To Destroy Peace *[Jericho VOP]* 11
Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Sends Message to Saddam on Cairo Summit *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 11
Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat on Leadership Meeting, U.S. Stand *[Jericho VOP]* 11
Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Warns Palestinians Might Resume Intifadah *[Gaza TV]* 13
Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat, Sha'th Comment on 'Conditional' Lifting of 'Siege' *[Jericho VOP]* 13
Palestinian Affairs: Hamas—'Fire Will Consume the Ruthless Occupiers' *[MA'ARIV 14 Jul]* 14
Palestinian Affairs: PLO Executive Committee, Cabinet Issue Joint Statement *[Jericho VOP]* 14
Palestinian Affairs: 'Asfur Denounces Plan To Increase Number of Settlers *[Jericho VOP]* 14

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Algeria: Meetings on National Dialogue To Resume 15 Jul *[Algiers Radio]* 16
Algeria: Zitouni Reportedly Removed From GIA Leadership *[Paris Radio]* 16
Algeria: New Head of Presidential Office Appointed *[Algiers TV]* 16

Egypt

Egypt: 'Arafat Arrives, Attends Air Force Graduation With Mubarak *[Cairo Radio]* 16
Egypt: Mubarak, 'Arafat Confer on Regional Developments, Peace Process *[MENA]* 16
Egypt: 'Arafat Departs After Talks With Mubarak *[Cairo Radio]* 16
Egypt: Musa To Attend Damascus Declaration Countries' Meeting in Muscat *[MENA]* 17
Egypt: Musa Comments on Status of Peace Process, U.S. Visit *[MENA]* 17
Egypt: Egyptian Envoy to Yemen Comments on Explosion Near Embassy *[MENA]* 17
Egypt: Israeli Spy Reportedly Arrested in Cairo *[AL-'ARABI 8 Jul]* 18
Egypt: AL-AHRAM Urges U.S. To Clarify Stand on Peace Process *[MENA]* 18

Israel: Netanyahu on Clinton, Peace, Secret File *[Jerusalem TV]* 31
Israel: Netanyahu Returns, Holds News Conference *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
Israel: Labor Dismisses Netanyahu's U.S. Visit 'Achievements' *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 35
Israel: Government's Lebanon Plan Said Including Unilateral Pullout *[HA'ARETZ 12 Jul]* 35
Israel: Gold Delivers Netanyahu Message to Syrian Ambassador *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 36
Israel: Cabinet Secretary Comments on Syrian, Palestinian Tracks *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 37
Israel: Gold Admits No Basis to Claim of 'Secret' Accords *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 14 Jul]* 37
Israel: Basyuni Comments on Significance of Netanyahu Visit *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 38
Israel: Adviser — Netanyahu Pledges Gradual Pullout From Hebron *[Jerusalem Radio]* 38
Israel: Shahaq Says Hizballah Violating Understandings on Lebanon *[Jerusalem Radio]* 39
Israel: Minister Eytan To Waive Right to Preliminary Hearing *[HA'ARETZ 14 Jul]* 39
Israel: Council Plans 8 New Settlements, Expansion of Existing Ones *[Jerusalem Radio]* 39
Israel: Defense, Agriculture Ministers Comment on Settlement Plans *[Jerusalem Radio]* 40
Israel: Ma'ale Adumim Plans To Double Population Within 4 Years *[Jerusalem Radio]* 40
Israel: Number of Terror Attack Alerts Said Up Since New Government *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 40
Israel: Police Clash With Thousands of Ultra-Orthodox in Jerusalem *[THE JERUSALEM POST 14 Jul]* 41

JORDAN

Jordan: Information Minister on Terrorism, Relations With Syria *[AL-QUDS 12 Jul]* 42
Jordan: 'Source' Cited on Border Security Talks With Syria *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 15 Jul]* 42
Jordan: U.S. Said Searching for Formula To Continue Peace Talks *[JORDAN TIMES 13 Jul]* 43
Jordan: Netanyahu Cannot Repeat Congress Remarks During Amman Visit *[AL-DUSTUR 13 Jul]* . 44
Jordan: 'All' Hamas 'Sympathizers' Released From Prison *[AL-MAJD 15 Jul]* 44
Jordan: King Addresses Officers on Bread Price Hike, Other Issues *[Amman TV]* 44

LEBANON

Lebanon: Iranian Ambassador Rejects 'Terrorism' Charges *[VOL]* 46
Lebanon: Hizballah's Nasrallah Vows To Resist Israel *[VOL]* 46
Lebanon: Defense Minister Views 'Talk of Partial Israeli Withdrawal' *[Beirut Radio]* 46
Lebanon: Hizballah Paper Reports Criticism of U.S. Ambassador *[AL-'AHD 5 Jul]* 46
Lebanon: Hizballah's Nasrallah Criticizes U.S. Envoy's 'Interference' *[AL-NAHAR 8 Jul]* 46
Lebanon: Hizballah Chief, Russian Envoy Discuss April Understanding *[AL-'AHD 28 Jun]* 47
Lebanon: Hizballah Issues Communique Criticizing Arab Summit *[AL-'AHD 28 Jun]* 47
Lebanon: Hizballah Claims Responsibility for Anti-SLA Attack *[VOL]* 48
Lebanon Approves Cease-Fire Monitoring Committee *[VOL]* 48

SYRIA

Syria: Al-Shar', Lebanon's Buwayz Consult on Cease-Fire Meeting *[Damascus Radio]* 49
Syria: Press on Damascus Declaration Meeting, Netanyahu Statements *[Damascus Radio]* 49
Syria: Netanyahu's Position on Peace Criticized *[Damascus Radio]* 49
Syria: Israel Warned Not To Turn Its Back on Peace Process *[Damascus Radio]* 51
Syria: Damascus Radio Denounces Israeli Prime Minister's Statements 52
Syria: Arab, World Opposition to Israeli 'Antipeace' Policy *[Damascus Radio]* 52
Syria: Press Urges Arabs To Stop All Normalization With Israel *[Damascus Radio]* 53

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Commander Denies Differences With Party *[Message of Freedom]* 55
Afghanistan: Mas'ud Issues 'Strong Criticism' of Coalition Government *[AFP]* 55

Afghanistan: Kabul To Follow Iranian Prototype of Power Structure *[IRNA]* 56
Afghanistan: Government Forces Recapture Northern District *[Kabul Radio]* 56
Afghanistan: Nangarhar Officials Deny Usamah Bin-Ladin in Afghanistan *[AL-ITTIHAD AL-USBU'I 11 Jul]* 56

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: New Parliament Session Opens Amid National Party Walkout *[AFP]* 57
Bangladesh: Dhaka Reports on First Session of New Parliament *[Dhaka Radio]* 58
Bangladesh: Hasina Calls Saudi Arabia Visit 'Very Fruitful' *[Dhaka Radio]* 58

India

India: 'Highly Placed' Kashmir Sources Report Hostages Still Alive *[INDIA EXPRESS 15 Jul]* 59
India: Gujral—CTBT Not in Nation's 'National Security' Interest *[THE TIMES OF INDIA 12 Jul]* 59
India: Russia Proposes Talks 'To Persuade' India To Sign CTBT *[BUSINESS STANDARD 12 Jul]* 60
India: Official Warns of 'Plenty of Heat' Over CTBT *[INDIAN EXPRESS 13 Jul]* 61
India: Court Rejects Petition To Issue Arrest Warrant Against Rao *[Delhi Radio]* 62
India: Congress Secretary Denies Demand for Rao's Resignation *[Delhi Radio]* 62
India: Government Crisis, Congress Party Threatens Withdrawal *[AFP]* 62
India: Home Minister Denies Case Against Rao Threat to Government *[Delhi TV]* 63
India: Gowda 'Unhappy' Over Minister's Remarks Against Congress *[Delhi Radio]* 63
India: Congress Party Says Home Minister's Remarks 'Irresponsible' *[Delhi Radio]* 63

Iran

Iran: Velayati Expresses Optimism for Iran-Turkey Relations *[IRAN NEWS 10 Jul]* 64
Iran: No Official Complaint Filed With Turkey Over Air Incident *[Tehran TV]* 64
Iran: Turkey Practicing 'Double Standards' on Border Issues *[KEYHAN 9 Jul]* 65
Iran: Paper Comments on Turkey's 'Islamist' Government *[AKHBAR 10 Jul]* 65
Iran: Iraqi Kurd Warns Turkey To Halt Military Operations *[IRAN NEWS 9 Jul]* 66
Iran: Commentary on Bosnian President's 12 Jul Statement *[Tehran International]* 67
Iran: Cabinet Approves Signing of Investment Agreement With Croatia *[Tehran Radio]* 67
Iran: Daily Examines Motives for Dhahran Explosion *[SALAM 29 Jun]* 67
Iran: Foreign Ministry Official on Afghanistan *[Tehran TV]* 69
Iran: Al-Shar' Visit Weakens Efforts To Disrupt Syrian-Saudi Ties *[Tehran Radio]* 71
Iran: Foreign Ministry on Damascus Declaration's Stance on Israel *[IRNA]* 72
Iran: Jannati Gives Friday Prayers, Criticizes Netanyahu *[Tehran Radio]* 72

Pakistan

Pakistan: Islamabad Reportedly Considering Change in Afghan Policy *[Message of Freedom]* 73
Pakistan: Major Party Representatives Urge More Ties With Kabul *[Islamabad Radio]* 73
Pakistan: Bhutto Offers 'Dialogue' to Opposition To Resolve Issues *[Islamabad Radio]* 74
Pakistan: Bhutto Welcomes 'Third-Party Mediation' in Kashmir *[Islamabad Radio]* 74

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Parliament Approves Extension of State of Emergency *[Colombo International]* ... 75
Sri Lanka: Troops Resume Advance in New Seda Pahara Operation *[Colombo International]* 75
Sri Lanka: Police Arrest LTTE 'Suicide Bomber,' Seize Explosives *[DAILY NEWS 13 Jul]* ... 75

Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab Affairs: Syria's al-Shar' Comments on Goal of Muscat Meeting

JN1307183096 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Video report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration member states started their meeting in Muscat this evening. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' is attending the meeting.

Faruq al-Shar' arrived in Muscat today to lead the Syrian delegation to these meetings. He was received at the airport by Yusuf Bin-'Alawi, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs; senior Omani Foreign Ministry officials; and the Syrian charge d'affaires in Muscat and the embassy staff.

Al-Shar' made a statement to journalists in which he said:

[Begin al-Shar' recording] At the recent Arab summit in Cairo, we had lengthy discussions on the peace process and its developments following the Israeli elections and the coming to power of a new government there. We believe that at this important meeting, the Damascus Declaration member states must continue what was agreed upon at the Cairo summit. The main topic for the Arabs is the peace process and the real challenges it is facing. These challenges may cause the complete collapse of the peace process, in light of the extremist positions of the new Israeli Government. Therefore, our meetings here in Muscat will provide a significant opportunity to consider what happened between the summit and now.

Inter-Arab Affairs: Syria's al-Shar' Comments on Peace Process, Terrorism

JN1407200896 Muscat Sultanate of Oman Television Network in Arabic 1825 GMT 14 Jul 96

[Interview with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' at the 13th meeting of the Damascus Declaration states' foreign ministers by an unidentified correspondent in Muscat on 14 July — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Al-Shar'] We said in the final statement that the Arab countries are asked to take steps commensurate with the new Israeli position in terms of departing from or evading the peace process. To be more specific, a number of Arab countries took some steps to encourage and advance the peace process. Israel is the party trying to withdraw and depart from the peace process. Therefore, these steps should be reversed. Positions that will advance the peace process should be adopted, or Israel should be told that the peace process is now semi-frozen and in a state of collapse. There is no resumption of the negotiations. The negotiations cannot be resumed on an unclear basis. The negotiations should be resumed on the basis of the U.S. land-for-peace initiative and the Security Council resolutions. Any steps we take or reconsider should serve this goal. When we reconsider steps that were taken by the Arab countries, we serve the objective of the peace process and make this peace a strategic option for us and for Israel. It is not enough to say that peace is our strategic option, if peace is not Israel's strategic option. If we do this, we will make a grave mistake and contradict ourselves, our peoples, and all the countries that are eager to accomplish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

[Correspondent] The agenda of this conference included terrorism and the recent bombings in Saudi Arabia, in al-Khubar city, and in Bahrain. How do you evaluate the current efforts to combat terrorism, the credibility of some neighborly countries regarding their relations, doubts about these relations, and building strategic relations with the neighbors?

[Al-Shar'] We believe that terrorism is condemned. It is a crime, and the perpetrators should be punished. We expressed this in the final statement as well as in the Cairo summit, and even before what took place in al-Khubar. Two days ago, during the meeting of the joint Syrian-Saudi committee, we asserted that Syria is very keen on maintaining the security and stability of the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and all the Gulf countries, including Bahrain, which faces internal incidents. This is a principled stand. However, at the same time, we should not allow Israel to label anyone who resists the Israeli occupation a terrorist. We believe that mixing [terrorism with resistance] here is condemned as it abrogates the history of peoples' resistance against colonialism and those who occupy their lands. Therefore, we asked for a distinction between condemned terrorism and legitimate resistance against the occupation. This distinction should be made in order to deter the terrorists who target the security of Arab countries under the slogan of struggle for a legitimate objective.

Inter-Arab Affairs: Omani Minister Addresses Muscat Talks

NC1307195896 Paris AFP in English 1742 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Muscat, July 13 (AFP) — Eight Arab foreign ministers began two days of talks Saturday [13 July] set to be dominated by the Middle

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East peace process and regional security following last month's deadly bomb blast in Saudi Arabia.

The problem of relations with Iraq and the on-going political unrest in Bahrain will also be on the agenda of the meeting of the eight signatories to the Damascus Declaration.

The group includes Egypt and Syria, together with the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

In an opening speech to delegates Omani Foreign Minister Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin 'Abdallah called for an international front to combat terrorism.

"We call on all the countries in the region and in the world to do everything possible to combat terrorism," he said. "We have no other choice but to cooperate to face up to it."

He called on Israel to make a firm commitment to peace, while at the same time stressing Arab commitment to the peace process.

"Israel should be more concerned that the other parties to find a solution to the peace process, as its success will guarantee peace and security" for the Jewish state, he said.

The latest meeting comes after last month's bombing of a military compound at al-Khubar in Saudi Arabia which killed 19 US airmen, and an increasingly bitter war of words between Arab and Israeli leaders over the peace process.

It is the group's 12th meeting since it was formed in 1991 and its first since last December's meeting in Damascus.

The Damascus Declaration was drawn up after the 1991 Gulf War to compensate Egypt and Syria for taking part in the multi-national military operation that drove Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

Although the document has not been implemented, the eight foreign ministers still meet from time to time to coordinate foreign policy.

Inter-Arab Affairs: League Members Voice Doubts on Conflict-Prevention Plan

NC1407203696 Paris AFP in English
2031 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, July 14 (AFP) — At least four countries have expressed reservations over a long-debated proposal to prevent inter-Arab conflicts, an Arab League source said on Sunday [14 July].

The delegates from the 22 member-nations of the League met in Cairo on Sunday, but could not agree on the draft mechanism for conflict prevention which is to be put before League ministers in September, the source said.

The proposal was made in 1995 by Tunisia, backed by the other members of the Arab Maghreb Union (Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia).

Egypt, Syria and Iraq expressed reservations on Sunday to the plan, particularly provisions for a multilateral Arab peacekeeping force, saying "every detail on the formation of this force should be examined after the foundations of the mechanism are made."

Saudi Arabia meanwhile insisted that "financing of the mechanism should come from the Arab League and not become an extra burden upon the member states," the source said.

in a series of resolution seeking to reestablish Arab solidarity, the Arab summit held in Cairo, June 22-23, approved the mechanism in principle. It also gave its agreement in principle to create an Arab pact of honor by which nations would vow to use peace means only to resolve their disputes.

The September meeting of foreign ministers is to examine each of these proposals.

Inter-Arab Affairs: Damascus Declaration Urges Iraq To Comply With UN

NC1407145096 Paris AFP in English
1357 GMT 14 Jul 96

[Report by Awad Said Al-Madailawi]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Muscat, July 14 (AFP) — Arab foreign ministers meeting here Sunday [14 July] called on the United States and the international community to pressure Israel to respect its commitments in the Middle East peace process.

In a statement issued at the end of their two-day meeting, the ministers threw their support behind the "just claims of Syria in face of the obstacles placed by Israel in the peace process."

The foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman, also expressed "deep concern" about the hardline policies of Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

They called on the "United States and Russia, the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, the European Union ... and the United Nations to guarantee that the Israeli government respects its commitments."

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Netanyahu told US leaders in Washington this week that Israel would not return any more occupied land to Arabs in exchange for peace, including the strategic Golan Heights, which Israel seized from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war.

The foreign ministers also supported the declaration issued at the June 22-23 Arab summit in Cairo, which warned Israel's new rightwing government to pursue the policy of land-for-peace or face the end of normalizing relations with Arab governments.

"Our reaction (to Netanyahu's comments) are in line with the political declaration from the Arab summit in Cairo," Oman's foreign minister, Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, told AFP

Netanyahu infuriated Arab leaders by insisting Jerusalem, including the eastern part which Israel occupied in 1967, would remain the Jewish state's eternal and undivided capital.

In addition, the eight Arab governments urged Iraq on Sunday to comply with United Nations resolutions linked to its 1990 invasion of Kuwait and to refrain from further threatening its neighbor.

"Iraq is called on to totally comply with UN Security Council resolutions, linked to its invasion of Kuwait ... and to completely cooperate with the UN Special Commission on disarming Iraq (UNSCOM)," a statement here said.

The meeting in Muscat comprises members of the Damascus Declaration, which was drawn up after the 1991 Gulf War to compensate Egypt and Syria for taking part in the multi-national military operation that drove Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

The ministers also declared their governments' "deep commitment to the integrity and unity of Iraq," and called on Baghdad to "refrain from any hostile acts or actions that would threaten Kuwait or any other countries in the region."

Iraq has been under a UN embargo since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The security council has refused to lift the sanctions, charging Baghdad is continuing programs to build weapons of mass destruction.

The meetings were also dominated by regional security following last month's deadly bomb blast in Saudi Arabia.

"Measures to protect the region from violence and terrorism were also the focus of discussion," an official close to the talks told AFP.

Inter-Arab Affairs: 'Text' of Damascus Declaration Statement

JN1507072696 Muscat Sultanate of Oman Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 14 Jul 96

["Text" of final statement issued at the conclusion of the 13th session of the foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration member states in Muscat on 14 July; read by Shaykh Jamil al-Hujaylan, secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] In response to an invitation by the Sultanate of Oman, the foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration states held their 13th session in Muscat between 13-14 July 1995. The meeting was chaired by His Excellency Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs. The following officials took part in the session: His Highness Shaykh Hamdan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, minister of state for foreign affairs in the United Arab Emirates [UAE]; His Highness Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah, foreign minister of the State of Bahrain; His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; His Excellency Faruq al-Shar', foreign minister of the Syrian Arab Republic; His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, foreign minister of the State of Qatar; His Excellency Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister of the State of Kuwait; His Excellency 'Amr Musa, foreign minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt; and His Excellency Shaykh Jamil Bin-Ibrahim al-Hujaylan, secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC].

Stemming from the role of the Damascus Declaration states in achieving Arab solidarity, promoting the Arab nation's causes, and preserving its common security; and in response to the requirements of the next stage, which is an extremely important and serious stage, especially with regard to the Middle East peace process, in light of regional and international developments, the ministers asserted their eagerness to adhere to, and act on, the final communique issued by the Arab summit held in the Arab Republic of Egypt between 21-23 June 1996. They also asserted their commitment to the firm, principled positions adopted unanimously by Arab leaders to enhance Arab solidarity and achieve a just peace, in response to the hopes and aspirations of the Arab nation, and to promote its interests and restore its usurped rights. They also asserted that they will pursue ways to crystallize vigorous Arab action in the next stage.

The ministers emphasized their countries' firm and principled stands toward the requirements of the peace

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process, as well as the need to adhere to the principles on which this process was launched at the Madrid conference. This should ensure Israel's full withdrawal from the Golan to the 4 June 1967 line, Israel's full and unconditional withdrawal from southern Lebanon and its western al-Biqa' to the internationally recognized borders, and Israel's complete withdrawal from all the occupied Palestinian territories, including Arab Jerusalem. This should also secure the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and establishing their independent state on their national soil.

The ministers lauded the broad international consensus in support of the Arab position on the peace process. This consensus was clear in the statements issued by the EU summit in Florence, the G-7 summit in Lyons, and the African summit in Cameroon, in addition to statements issued previously by the Islamic summit in Casablanca and the nonaligned summit in Cartagena.

In this context, the ministers asserted that pursuing the peace process and resuming the negotiations requires adherence to the foundations and principles on which the peace process was originally based, particularly Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, the land-for-peace principle, and the assertions made to the parties.

The ministers expressed extreme concern over the statements of the Israeli prime minister during his recent visit to the United States, especially regarding his insistence on bolstering Israel's occupation of Arab territories, keeping Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty, deeming it a capital of Israel, on the pretext of preserving Israel's security, as well as attempting to impose a fait accompli that undermines negotiations. This is a departure from the land-for-peace principle and a violation of the firm principle on which the peace process is based; namely, achieving balanced, equitable security for all states of the region, without discrimination or exception, and not only achieving Israel's security. In addition, the Israeli prime minister's call for resuming the negotiations without preconditions is an abandonment and avoidance of the foundations on which the peace process was launched, represented in the resolutions of international legitimacy. The Israeli prime minister's call for reciprocity — if compared with his stands that disavow the principles and foundations of the peacemaking process — is a call to return the region to an atmosphere of confrontation and tension.

The ministers expressed their astonishment and amazement that the Israeli prime minister should talk about democracy and human rights at a time when Israel continues a policy of occupation and violation of rights guaranteed by the Geneva Convention for Arab citizens under Israeli occupation. Israel also continues to procrastinate and dodge the commitments it made within the context of the peace process.

In this context, the ministers reiterated the Arab summit's position that the Israeli Government's adherence to these stands will lead to the collapse of the peace process. Such a development poses great threats and portends dire consequences that will return the region to a cycle of tension and make all Arab countries reconsider the steps taken toward Israel as part of the peace process. The Israeli Government alone is responsible for this.

The ministers also affirmed their adherence to the resolutions of international legitimacy, which prohibit recognition or acceptance of any situation that results from Israel's settlement activity in the occupied Arab territories, since this does not create any rights or constitute any commitments. The ministers said the establishment of settlements and bringing in of settlers is a violation of the Geneva Conventions and the Madrid framework and obstructs the peace process.

The ministers recalled the assertions made recently by the United States, which is a sponsor of the peace process, about the need for the peace process to be based on the foundations of the Madrid conference and the land-for-peace principle, and the need for the Israeli Government to fulfill all the commitments reached. They noted that security can never be achieved without achieving peace. The ministers call on the sponsors of the peace process, especially the United States, the Russian Federation, the EU, the PRC, Japan, the nonaligned states, other concerned countries, and the United Nations and other international institutions, to implement these assertions and ensure that Israel will not violate the principles and foundations on which the peace process was based; namely, the resolutions of international legitimacy, including Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, the land-for-peace principle, and the assertions made to the parties, and that Israel will fulfill all the commitments that were reached within the context of the peace process.

The ministers reiterated their states' support for the just Syrian demands to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of international legitimacy. They expressed support for Syria in confronting the obstacles placed by Israel on the path of peace and its falsehoods against Syria with the aim of obstructing the peace process.

The ministers stressed that Israel should join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and open all its nuclear facilities to the International Atomic Energy Agency's

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international inspection regime as a basic step toward turning the Middle East, including the Gulf region, into a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons.

The ministers called on Iraq to fully implement the Security Council resolutions related to its aggression against the State of Kuwait, take the necessary measures that secure the release of all Kuwaiti prisoners and other nationals, return seized property, abide by the mechanism of compensation, fully cooperate with the UN Special Commission in charge of destroying the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, and abide by Security Council Resolution 949 by refraining from any provocative or hostile action that would threaten the State of Kuwait and other states in the region.

The ministers welcomed the memorandum of understanding signed on 20 May 1996 between Iraq and the United Nations to implement Resolution 986 which allows Iraq to sell oil worth $2 billion, considering it a positive step toward alleviating the suffering of the Iraqi people—suffering for which the Iraqi Government is fully responsible. They called for expediting the implementation of this memorandum. The ministers reiterated their full concern for Iraq's unity and expressed their rejection of any policies or measures targeting Iraq's territorial integrity.

The ministers reviewed the developments in relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran out of concern to establish sound and positive relations with it. They reaffirmed the extreme importance of security and stability in the Gulf region and the entire world, particularly for the peoples and countries of the region, including Iran, since Gulf security is considered an indivisible part of pan-Arab security and is organically linked to the security and stability of all Arab states.

The ministers reiterated their solidarity with the sisterly State of Bahrain and their full support for the measures it is taking to entrench its security and stability. They strongly rejected any interference in the internal affairs of the State of Bahrain and stressed their support for it against any threats from any party whatsoever. Proceeding from the Arab summit's call on Iran to respect the sovereignty of the State of Bahrain within the framework of mutual respect and good neighborliness, the ministers expressed their appreciation of Syria's efforts that resulted in halting media campaigns as a first step toward clearing Bahraini-Iranian relations on the basis of understanding and good neighborliness in a way that will contribute to supporting the security and stability of sisterly Bahrain and the regional states.

The ministers reviewed with great concern the issue of the Iranian occupation of the three UAE islands of Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa, and the UAE's efforts to regain sovereignty over the three islands through peaceful means in accordance with the acknowledged international norms on the peaceful settlement of disputes among countries and the principles and rules of international law, including the recourse to the International Court of Justice [ICJ].

The ministers recalled the recurrent serious and sincere calls to the Islamic Republic of Iran by the UAE, the GCC, the Damascus Declaration countries, the Arab League Council, and, finally, the Arab summit call.

The ministers reiterated the UAE's sovereignty over its three islands of Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa and their full support for all the measures and peaceful means adopted by the UAE to regain sovereignty over these islands.

The ministers reiterated their call to the Iranian government to end its occupation of the three islands, desist from exercising the policy of the fait accompli by force, suspend implementation of any unilateral measure, remove any installation unilaterally established on the three islands, resort to peaceful means to settle the dispute on these islands in accordance with international law principles and rules, and agree to refer the issue to the ICJ.

Noting that the UAE's security and stability and the preservation of its independence and sovereignty and territorial integrity are an indivisible part of the security of the Arab Gulf countries and pan-Arab security, the ministers stressed the need for the Islamic Republic of Iran to abide by principles of good neighborliness; respect the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the countries in the region; not interfere in domestic affairs; and resort to peaceful means for settling disputes in its relations with the countries of the region and abide by the commitments these principles entail.

The ministers said their countries are looking forward to a positive development in Turkey's relations with Syria. They said they are optimistic over the emergence of new signs in Turkey's policy that would pave the way for the establishment of relations of cooperation and good neighborliness between Syria and Turkey that would enhance joint Arab-Turkish interests. They said they hope the Turkish government would review the Turkish-Israeli military agreement in a manner that would not harm the Arab countries' security.

The ministers discussed the manifestation of violence and international terrorism. They condemned and denounced the terrorist explosion in al-Khubar in Saudi

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Arabia on 25 June 1996. At the same time, they expressed their full support for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in combating terrorism, and stressed they have full confidence in its ability to confront these terrorist operations.

While the ministers denounce attempts to stigmatize legitimate national resistance as terrorism, they condemn all forms of terrorist and sabotage operations, and the incitement to disrupt order experienced by several countries including Arab countries, to harm their security and stability. The ministers voiced support for these countries. The ministers also supported the efforts and measures to hold an international conference for tackling the many aspects of international terrorism, and affirmed their commitment to the inalienable right to resist occupation and aggression. They called for the coordination of international efforts to check acts of violence and terrorism, make sure that the perpetrators of these actions are brought to trial, and prevent the terrorist elements from using the territory of any country for the purpose of seeking funds, obtaining weapons, or inciting terrorism and violence through the foreign media.

The ministers welcomed the agreement on principles between Yemen and Eritrea to refer the dispute between them to international arbitration and stressed the need to take into consideration neighborly relations and joint interests as this will have a positive impact on the security and stability of the region.

The ministers voiced anxiety over the continued deterioration of the situation in Somalia and called on the warring Somali factions to shoulder their responsibilities by achieving a comprehensive national reconciliation, and forming a national unity government that represents all the Somali people's factions.

The ministers also called on all the Afghan factions to respect the cease-fire, and implement the Mecca agreement by establishing peace and realizing national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

The ministers stressed their support for the Arab League and for consolidating its status and invigorating its role, not to mention the need to abide by its charter and decisions to safeguard the Arab nation's higher interests.

The ministers voiced their thanks and appreciation for the fraternal Sultanate of Oman and the Omani government, under His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id, and the Omani people for the accord and hospitality they were accorded and wished Oman prosperity and progress.

The ministers will hold their next meeting in the Arab Republic of Egypt in January 1997.

Issued in Muscat on 14 July 1996

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Leaves for Talks With Mubarak in Cairo

JN1407073296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0700 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat left the homeland for Cairo a short while ago for important official talks with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Zuhdi al-Qidrah said that the Palestinian-Egyptian summit talks will deal with the latest developments in the peace process. He added that the meeting is part of the ongoing and constant coordination between the two presidents in view of Egypt's support for the Palestinian cause on all levels.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Returns to Gaza After 'Fruitful' Talks With Mubarak

JN1507095796 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0900 GMT 15 Jul 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat returned to the homeland from Cairo this morning.

On arrival at the Presidency in Gaza, 'Arafat described his visit to Egypt and his talks with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak as fruitful, successful, and very important. President 'Arafat said he and the Egyptian President participated in the graduation ceremony of 63 Egyptian pilots in the Bilbis air base yesterday which he described as important. President 'Arafat said that he discussed with President Mubarak details of how to push the peace process forward despite what we face from the Israeli side.

On whether the peace process is facing a crisis, President 'Arafat told the press: Let us wait and see how the other side implements what we had agreed on.

President 'Arafat visited Egypt yesterday, attended the graduation ceremony of Egyptian Air Force pilots and met with Egyptian President Mubarak with whom he discussed the latest developments and means to push the peace process forward.

Ministers, officials, and military commanders were present at the presidency in Gaza to welcome him on arrival. 'Arafat reviewed the honor guard.

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Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat on Netanyahu's Policy, Jerusalem, Peace

NC1207183896 London MBC Television in Arabic 1705 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Interview with PA Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, in Gaza, by Nidal Qabalan, in London, and Muhammad al-Shinnawi, in Washington; from the "Dialogue With the West" program— live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Qabalan] Mr. President: Good evening and a thousand thanks for accepting this invitation. Welcome to the "Dialogue With The West."

['Arafat] Welcome.

[Qabalan] Mr. President, we begin with a pressing question in the Arab world, the region, and beyond. What are the developments on the Palestinian-Israel track and what are the dangers in Israel's new policy under Netanyahu in general?

['Arafat] It must be understood that the new prime minister and the new alliance currently governing Israel based their entire election campaign on not pursuing the peace process. Moreover, they stressed the nonimplementation of what has been agreed upon, be it the accords we signed in Oslo or in Washington under the supervision of President Clinton and President Mubarak and the friendly Norwegian Government.

Not only this, things went as far as to talk about the new conditions he is to impose, not only on the Palestinian track, but also on the Lebanese and Syrian tracks, even interfering in Syria's internal affairs as he tries to interfere in Palestinian internal affairs. But I say to him and to the entire world that peace is not a Palestinian need and an Arab need; it is an Israeli need and an international need.

Peace in the Middle Eastern geographic, political, economic, and international strategy cannot be threatened by expressions here or there or by an attempt to wreck what has been achieved on the current Arab tracks or wreck what could be achieved on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

When we went to Madrid....[pauses] Netanyahu and the current Israeli Government must remember that it was the Likud that went to Madrid. Shamir was the head of the delegation. Netanyahu must remember that he was the spokesman of the Israeli delegation in Madrid. Madrid was based on the initiative of President Bush, who mentioned land for peace according to UN resolutions, namely Resolutions 242 and 338. We have letters signed by the Israeli side and letters signed by James Baker, the former U.S. secretary of state. We have a letter of assurances on the importance of continuing this process on condition that no demographic changes be applied on the ground. In other words, no changes are allowed in holy Jerusalem, and holy Jerusalem, as you know, is part of the territories occupied in 1967. What applies to other territories occupied in that year applies to Jerusalem. Also, Resolution 242, stating that it is part of the 1967-occupied territories, applies to Jerusalem.

When I speak about holy Jerusalem I mean the eternal capital of the state of Palestine, whether people like it or not. Anyone who does not like this can come and drink from the Gaza Sea or the Dead Sea.

[Qabalan] Thank you, Mr. President. This is a clear and strong message from Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat to Israel's new Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. ..

['Arafat interrupts] No, to the whole world.

[Qabalan] And, to the whole world. Over to our colleague Muhammad al-Shinnawi in Washington.

[Al-Shinnawi] Mr. President, as part of his charges against the Palestinian Authority [PA] of the violation of the Oslo Accord by the PA's activities in Jerusalem, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, as reported by the Israeli press, will demand the closure of Orient House, the Palestinian Affairs Office, and two other offices next week. What will your response be?

['Arafat] It seems his memory is not helping him. We opened Orient House in the name of the PLO when we went to Madrid. He [Netanyahu] was the chief negotiator. I have a signed letter from the Israeli side that says the Israeli side must respect, help, and protect the Arab Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem as well as the Christian and Muslim places. We insist on placing Christianity before Islam out of our allegiance to the contractual obligation signed by Caliph 'Umar Bin-al-Khattab with Patriarch Sofronious.

[Qabalan] Mr. President, what is required on the Arab level at this critical stage to confront this hardline Israeli stance?

['Arafat] He must understand that the peace he signed with us is linked with the peace signed with the entire Arab nation. The Palestinian peace is the principal base for the Arab peace. It is the chief base according to which the doors of many countries were opened, beginning with China through Senegal to Indonesia. Has he forgotten this? He must know that all these countries opened their doors in accordance with the peace that we signed with the Israelis during the first and second stages in Oslo, Cairo, and Washington.

This is not a Palestinian-Israeli agreement. These agreements are internationally supervised by the peace

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process sponsors, Russia and the United States, as well as the rest of the world, which attended the signing ceremony of the agreements. Some leaders took part in the signing, like the last signing ceremony, which was attended by Christopher and Kozyrev on behalf of the conference sponsors; His Majesty King Husayn and President Mubarak; Gonzales on behalf of the EC; the Norwegian foreign minister; and Japan. These agreements are not bilateral ones between us and the Israelis. May I remind the world that there was not only the Arab communique issued by the Cairo summit with the blessing and efforts of President Mubarak. There was a clear and strong communique issued by the European summit and another communique by the G-7 group in addition to Russia meeting in France.

I must remind the world that these are not agreements between us and the Israelis. It is, therefore, not my responsibility to speak about them alone. It is the responsibility of the world. The world wants peace hence Netanyahu and the Israeli Government must face the world, not the Palestinians, if they do not want peace.

Nobody can impose anything like ideas, inventions, and expressions based on Zionist ideology on the Palestinian people, the Arab nation, and beyond.

[Al-Shinnawi] Mahmud 'Abbas said in Morocco that the Palestinians express fears of the ambiguous U.S. stand on the land-for-peace principle. Your Excellency mentioned that there is a U.S. letter of assurances. Can you confirm this?

['Arafat] Yes. There is a letter of assurances containing the land-for-peace principle and UN resolutions, particularly Resolution 242. It also stipulates that it is impermissible to make any demographic changes, I repeat demographic, not population or geography. There must be no new settlements or changes in Jerusalem or any other place in the Palestinian arena at this stage.

[Qabalan] Mr. President, during his recent visit to Washington, Netanyahu tried to bypass the Middle East peace process by introducing the issues of terrorism and religious affairs and attempted to differentiate between Islam and what he termed the hardline elements. Jerusalem is the crux of the Arab-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli conflicts. How will you confront this stand, particularly on the Jerusalem issue?

['Arafat] We will confront it? The Arab world will confront it, so will the Islamic and the Christian worlds. Does the isolation of Jerusalem and preventing Muslims and Christians from reaching their mosques and churches concern the Palestinian stand alone? Let us not mix up the principles. We should know that this is a Palestinian, Arab, Christian, Islamic, and international stand. This is not a normal process.

[Qabalan] And not subject to negotiations, Mr. President?

['Arafat] No. It is one of the issues to be discussed. One issue is that of the refugees. There are two kinds of refugee. We call the refugees of 1967 displaced persons. There is a quadripartite Israeli-Jordanian-Egyptian-Palestinian committee, which has already started its work. It is true that this committee has not done anything since the [Israeli] elections. What we are referring to are the old refugees, those of 1948, to whom Resolution 194 applies. In the multilateral negotiations, they acknowledged that this specific issue should be based on Security Council Resolution 194. There are also the issues of the borders, the settlements, and the city of Jerusalem. Here it must be understood that we have a U.S. letter of guarantees. We have the [Madrid] conference sponsors, EU, international, Arab, Christian, and Islamic stances. I was with my brother Abu-Mazin in Morocco and met His Majesty King Hassan, the Islamic summit chairman. I discussed this specific issue with him in his capacity as the Islamic summit chairman and the Jerusalem committee chairman. We agreed on measures that will be made public soon, God willing.

[Qabalan] Mr. President, we received two questions from brother Ahmad in the United Arab Emirates and brother Badr in Kuwait. They ask: Did the PLO and the Palestinian leadership wager on a losing horse when they wagered on Peres and conceded more than they gained? Or is the wagering still valid and the international community will fulfill Palestinian ambitions in the peace process?

['Arafat] Let me say something. When I went to the United Nations in 1974 to speak on behalf of the Palestinian people, the last words I said were: I came to hold out the olive branch in one hand and the rifle to protect it. We have, from the start, attempted to find solutions. In 1968 we proposed a democratic state where Muslims, Christians, and Jews would coexist. We then proposed unity and afterward the 10 points in the Palestine National Council, which met in 1974—following the 1973 war. The ten points called for a national authority on any part of Palestinian soil that is liberated or from which the Israelis withdraw. Thus when we started the talks in Madrid and then in Oslo, we were not alone. We started them with the Arab nation. The whole Arab nation was present with us in Madrid. Oslo was one of the Madrid conference outcomes. Or have we forgotten this? No. We do not wager on losing or winning horses. We are wagering on the Palestinian

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people's and the Arab nation's choice, on our friends, on our brothers everywhere, and on the world's will, which says land in return for peace. We know we are facing a new unipolar world order and we must know what this means. This new world order should not be at the expense of our Arab nation; the Arab nation should be active and crucial in shaping this new world order.

[Qabalan] Mr. President, we have a question from our brother in France. He says: Netanyahu has laid down new conditions for negotiations with the Palestinians. Will you continue to negotiate with him if these conditions are unacceptable?

['Arafat] The answer to this question must come from the conference's two cosponsors, not me. I have agreements that should be respected. The cosponsors and the international community must uphold what we have achieved because what we have achieved was done under their supervision and sponsorship.

[Qabalan] What will you demand then from the Clinton administration?

['Arafat] We will ask President Clinton, President Yeltsin, the EU summit, the Security Council's permanent members....[pauses] You recall that our friends in China insisted that I visit Beijing after the Israeli elections and Netanyahu's victory. We discussed the peace issue as one of the principal points that Chinese leaders care about, like the other Security Council permanent members and the rest of the world.

[Qabalan] Mr. President, the recent extraordinary Arab summit in Cairo created optimism that the Arabs will close rank in light of and against the new challenges. How do you describe your relations with Damascus following the forthright Syrian call to open a new chapter in Palestinian-Syrian relations?

['Arafat] First, there was no misunderstanding between us and our Syrian brothers. There were only our interpretations and their own. I thank my brother President al-Asad for that warm meeting between us in Cairo in the presence of President Mubarak. There is a definite determination to consolidate and strengthen these inter-Arab relations, including Syrian-Palestinian ties, because, as I said, we are facing the same fate and future and also the same, common challenge.

I want to tell everyone that I am not one to be shaken by statements made here or there by the Israeli Government—just like a mountain that is not shaken by the wind.

[Al-Shinnawi] Mr. President, do you accept Netanyahu's accusations that the PA has failed to fulfill the security aspect and pursue Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and al-Jihad elements in Gaza?

['Arafat] Just like the failure when people who were praying were massacred in the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. The daily violations by the settlers have never stopped. We have presented 47 Israeli violations of the agreements to the cosponsors, the EU, the Nonaligned countries, the African summit, the Islamic countries, and the United Nations.

[Qabalan] We have a question from brother Nasir from Denmark to President 'Arafat. He says: Does President 'Arafat not believe that this stage requires there to be no inter-Palestinian differences in facing the new Israeli Government? What is your answer to Sharon's appointment as a member of the Netanyahu government?

['Arafat] First, do you expect to have a Likud government that does not include Ari'el Sharon? Does our brother not know the rudiments of Israeli politics?

Second, it should be known that the Palestinian house is, thank God, strong and solid. This was manifested in the elections we held on the homeland's soil, which brought forth the Palestinian Legislative Council, and in the presidential elections. There were also the meetings of the Palestine National Council. Therefore, the Palestinian house is in good shape. But this does not mean that there are no different views here or there. We say: God bless any man who rectifies another's mistakes. Any Palestinian has the right to lift the telephone, call Yasir 'Arafat, and tell him his view and his opposition to or approval of what we are doing.

[Al-Shinnawi] Mr. President, Netanyahu said in Washington that the Jews have the right to live anywhere they choose in the region. Does that not make you recall the start of the peace process and the attempt to postpone the issue of....

['Arafat interrupts] First, it appears that Netanyahu, as a stranger in the region, does not know that from its birth the Islamic state has opened its arms to our Christian and Jewish brothers. It appears that he does not know history. He does not know that Jewish brothers who are dear to us are living among the Arab nation, from Morocco to Syria, Egypt, Yemen, and other Arab countries. We are proud that they are an inseparable part of our Arab nation. Let me tell you something: In the Palestinian state and in the Palestinian Legislative Council there is a representative of our brothers, the Samaritans. He won in the elections for the Nabulus region and is a member of the Legislative Council. The Naturai [word indistinct] say they are Palestinians. It

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seems there are some things he must learn before he comes to talk to us.

[Qabalan] Thank you, Mr. President.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Criticizes Netanyahu's Policies

JN1207200296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat said that the U.S. letter of assurances is based on the establishment of peace in the region relying on the land-for-peace principle, the resolutions of international legitimacy, and the need not to institute any demographic changes in occupied Jerusalem. In an interview with MBC Television, carried a short while ago, he criticized Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's policy. He noted that the Likud's electoral campaign proceeded from rejecting both the peace process and implementing all the agreements signed with Israel in Oslo, Cairo, and Washington.

His excellency the president said that Netanyahu stipulates conditions for the resumption of the peace process not only on the Palestinian negotiating track, but also on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. He asserted that peace is not only in the interest of Palestinians; rather, it is in the interest of the Israelis, the Arabs, and the international community. The president said that the Likud government is the party that went to Madrid conference in 1993 [as heard]. He added that by that time, Netanyahu was the official spokesman of the Israeli delegation.

Asked about Israeli violations in the holy city as represented in continuing the policy of isolating Jerusalem and the plan to shut down Palestinian institutions there, the president said that the Arab, Islamic, and Christian world will not stand by idle vis-a-vis these violations. His excellency the president highlighted the resolutions of the Arab summit that was held in Cairo and the G-7 leaders' summit in the French city of Lyon. He said that these summits called for resuming the peace process in the Middle East and reaching a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Asked about the Palestinian-Syrian relations, the president said that there are good relations between the two countries. He asserted that there was no misunderstanding, but rather differences in opinions on the various issues. The president said that there is determination to strengthen inter-Palestinian relations, the Palestinian-Syrian relations, and the inter-Arab relations. He said that the Arab nation shares a common destiny.

Palestinian Affairs: Leadership Seeking Support To Face 'Dangers' to Peace

JN1307061896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat presided over a joint meeting of the PLO Executive Committee and the Council of Ministers in Gaza last night. The meeting was attended by Palestine National Council Speaker Salim al-Za'nun and the Palestinian Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray'. The conferees reviewed the results and resolutions of the African summit which was held recently in Yaounde in Cameroon, as well as the latest political developments in the region in light of the statements made recently by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu on the peace process and occupied Jerusalem. The joint meeting commended the results and resolutions of the African summit, particularly with regard to its support for the Palestinian stand vis-a-vis the peace process.

Health Minister Riyad al-Za'nun said: The joint meeting of the PLO Executive Committee and the Council of Ministers decided to continue moves to mobilize the largest Arab, European, and international support to face the dangers threatening the peace process and the attempt by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to evade the signed agreements.

Commenting on Netanyahu's statements regarding his intention to contact the National Authority, Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray', also known as Abu-'Ala', said: The National Authority supports contacts and negotiations, not holding new negotiations on what was agreed on. Quray' called on Israel to implement all signed agreements.

Finance Minister Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi warned of the collapse of the peace process in the region, reaffirming that the National Authority is studying carefully the steps that must be taken to save this process from collapse.

Palestinian Affairs: Awqaf Minister Denounces Plan To Close Jerusalem Offices

JN1307075296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Shaykh Hasan Tahbub, minister of Awqaf and religious affairs and chairman of the Higher Islamic Committee in occupied Jerusalem, denounced the Israeli Government's intention to close down the committee's offices. In a statement to the PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY, WAFA, Shaykh Tahbub said that the Islamic Committee has been the caretaker of Islamic affairs in Palestine since 1967. He

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added that the committee shouldered its responsibilities in running the Muslims' affairs and in looking after their holy places as acknowledged by the world organizations.

Minister Tahbub said that closing down Palestinian institutions in occupied Jerusalem conflicts with the peace agreements, adding that Israeli measures and practices on the ground will complicate matters and create instability in the region.

Palestinian Affairs: Netanyahu's 'Battle' Over Jerusalem Aims To Destroy Peace

JN1307090096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0405 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Unattributed talk from "A New Day" feature]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem is the capital of our souls. We said, we are saying, and we will continue to say, with confidence, that Jerusalem, with all that it has, means everything to us. It means everything to us as Palestinians — Muslims and Christians — and as Arabs. Jerusalem is our past, present, and future; it is our heart and the dream of our coming generations.

The fierce battle launched by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu is not directed against Jerusalem only; it is primarily directed against all human values, against world public opinion, and against the entire peace process. The battle launched by Netanyahu today over Jerusalem is a gate from which he wants to exit the peace process in the interest of Israeli extremism and in the interest of those who cast their votes in the recent Israeli elections in exchange for the promises they received to tamper with the holy city, steal more Palestinian land, build more settlements, and consequently destroy the peace process.

However, the Netanyahu government should understand that the battle over Jerusalem is a battle against peace and that the battle over settlements, prisoners, Hebron, and the independent state is a fierce battle against the aspirations and hopes of our people and against large-scale world support for the peace agreements in the region. They should also understand that the battle over Jerusalem is not directed against the Palestinian-Israeli accord only, but against the entire Arab nation.

Netanyahu will be mistaken if he believes for one moment that he is capable of penetrating any Arab capital if he ignores the main factor in the peace equation, which is the Palestinian factor, the factor of Jerusalem, whose address is the Palestinian National Authority. President Yasir 'Arafat's statement was a clear message that the encroachment on the peace process is not only an encroachment on the Palestinian track, but also an encroachment on all Arab tracks, and consequently, an encroachment on the international will which blessed the peace process.

We would like to reiterate that Netanyahu and those who turn a blind eye to his devastating stands will be mistaken if they believe that the Israeli policy, which is based on threats, Judaization, building settlements, and burying heads in the sand, can survive in this era, the era of peace and Palestinian will on Palestinian land, the era of the international will, which supported, blessed, and guaranteed this peace based on clear international resolutions. Netanyahu — who has not read history correctly — will be mistaken if he believes he can devour Jerusalem and turn it into a secondary issue. Jerusalem, as we have said, is our soul, heart, the future of our coming generation, and our history, which we will not relinquish.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Sends Message to Saddam on Cairo Summit

JN1307163496 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1500 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat sent a message to his Iraqi counterpart Saddam Husayn, briefing him on the results of the recent Cairo summit, which Iraq did not attend.

'Azzam al-Ahmad, the Palestinian ambassador in Baghdad who conveyed the message, said the message also discusses current efforts to restore Arab solidarity and joint Arab action that includes all Arabs states, including Iraq.

Al-Ahmad also said that the Palestinian Authority [PA] is holding contacts with the United Nations to implement an Iraqi proposal to donate crude oil to the United Nation's Relief and Works Agency, UNRWA. Al-Ahmad expressed the PA's desire to import the Iraqi crude into the autonomous areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat on Leadership Meeting, U.S. Stand

JN1307111896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0450 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Telephone interview with Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Palestinian minister of local government and Legislative Council member, in Gaza, by unidentified radio correspondent in the studio; from "A New Day" feature — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] Palestinian President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] yesterday defined the main outlines of the Palestinian policy

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in light of Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's recent statements. The PLO Executive Committee and the Council of Ministers held a joint meeting in Gaza yesterday. Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, good morning.

['Urayqat] Good morning.

[Correspondent] What did you study yesterday in the joint meeting with regard to the battle over Jerusalem, the Israeli measures to close down the Palestinian institutions [in Jerusalem], the Israeli Government's disavowal of the agreements with the Israeli side, and the unclear U.S. position?

['Urayqat] The joint meeting discussed all these issues, as well as the deception practiced by the new Israeli new government, particularly with regard to the talk about peace. The Palestinian position has been clear from the beginning. There is a Palestinian commitment to the peace process; there is an Arab (?commitment) to the peace process. However, it seems that the present Israeli Government is trying to strangle the peace process through a number of practices. First, there are no negotiations; second, the practices on the ground are undermining the pillars of the peace process, such as settlement activities, Jerusalem, [words indistinct]. In addition to this, the Israeli Government is trying to change the features or the clauses of the accord. These matters, in fact, constitute a real danger to the peace process.

A statement will be issued on the joint meeting which was held yesterday under Brother Abu-'Ammar. Regarding the issue of Jerusalem, it is a topic on the agenda of the final-stage talks. This was endorsed by the Israeli Government. In addition to this, the Israeli Government committed itself not to carry out any unilateral measure that would violate the final-stage agreement.

Therefore, all measures carried out by the Israeli Government on the ground in Jerusalem conflict with the agreement. When Netanyahu or others say that Jerusalem is the eternal capital and when they utter similar nonsense, this in fact conflicts with the agreement that Jerusalem is on the agenda of the final-stage talks, which began on 5 May 1996. International legitimacy asserted through clear UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions that al-Quds al-Sharif is an occupied Palestinian territory on which Resolution 242 applies like the other territories which were occupied in 1967.

[Correspondent] Dr. Sa'ib, how did you assess the U.S. position yesterday?

['Urayqat] Regarding the U.S. position, the U.S. Congress — the Senate and the House of Representatives — is known for its Zionism. It is more Israeli than the Israelis themselves. It is known that the Congress is more Zionist than the Knesset itself. This matter is very serious. When the U.S. Congress is like this, does this mean that this an encouragement of aggression? Yes, this encourages aggression and the attempt to undermine the peace process which was founded by the former U.S. Administration, the Bush administration.

This encourages the undermining of the final-stage talks and what was agreed with regard to Jerusalem and other topics and the undermining of the land-for-peace principle. This also supports the policy of settlement building, which all U.S. administrations considered illegitimate and an obstacle to peace. So, when Netanyahu, who is undermining the peace process and its pillars, receives Congress applause, this constitutes blatant encouragement of aggression and undermining of the peace process. A number of Palestinian steps will be taken soon to counter this.

[Correspondent] Do you rely on an Arab stand to promote the Palestinian position?

['Urayqat] We entered the peace process because peace requires both parties' agreement on changing conditions, geography, politics, and economy. Yes, peace is a Palestinian need, but as President Abu-'Ammar said: Peace is a Palestinian, as well as an Israeli need. Without resolving all aspects of the Palestinian issue and without peace for the Palestinian people there will be no peace for anyone. The world has realized this over the past years. We do not beg for peace from anybody. We did not disappear; we continued to exist and we will continue to exist. The Palestinian people will not be canceled from the geographical or political map. As we said, we seek to solve the Palestinian issue in accordance with peaceful methods and negotiations. However, if Israel and its new government opts for undermining the pillars of the peace process, the Palestinian people will continue their struggle and determination to build their independent Palestinian state with al-Quds al-Sharif as its capital. In this, we are supported by the Arabs and by the world — Europe, the nonaligned countries, and the African countries. The statements issued by these countries are the strongest statements in support of the Palestinian issue issued since 1967.

[Correspondent] The battle for peace is everybody's battle. Dr. Sa'id 'Urayqat, will there be imminent meetings for the Arab countries which are involved in the peace process?

['Urayqat] I believe that within the next hours Brother Abu-'Ammar will begin his moves toward the Arab world. As you know, one of the resolutions of the recent Arab summit stipulates that the Arabs will follow up the Israeli stands in order to define what the Arab

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countries should do. There will be Palestinian moves toward the Arab world, the United States, and Europe. The president will announce all this in the next few days.

[Correspondent] Will the president visit Damascus soon?

['Urayqat] There are preparations for this. I do not know when it will take place, but it is a matter of time.

[Correspondent] Thank you Dr. Sa'id 'Urayqat, minister of local government and member of the Legislative Council. Good morning.

['Urayqat] Thank you.

Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Warns Palestinians Might Resume Intifadah

JN1307150696 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ahmad Quray', speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, has warned that the Palestinians might resume the intifadah if the new Israeli Government goes ahead with its current policy. In a statement to the BBC, Quray' said that if the Palestinians reach the stage of despair, they will have no other option except confrontation, which will be accompanied by political and diplomatic measures.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat, Sha'th Comment on 'Conditional' Lifting of 'Siege'

JN1207180096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1113 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza; from the "Today's Events" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Yasir 'Arafat said Israel should honor the agreements that were signed. He said this in reply to a question by the Voice of Palestine while commenting on the statements of the Israeli Government about a conditional lifting of the Israeli siege of the Palestinian territories. [passage omitted]

Commenting on the Israeli Government's conditional lifting of the Israeli siege if four Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem were closed and if Palestinian prisoners are not released, Dr. Nabil Sha'th said:

[Begin Sha'th recording] The new Israeli prime minister, who announced his rejection of preconditions, is setting preconditions daily, which are rejected. Our conditions are not preconditions but are part of agreements signed with Israel and of the terms of reference of the negotiating process. However, what he wants is rejected because it is against these agreements. Our arrest and release of our people is decided by the law and not by Netanyahu's wishes. Any person who is accused will stand trial, and the court will decide if he is guilty or innocent. If a person is innocent, he will be released. We do not need Netanyahu's advice on how to treat our own people. As for Jerusalem, it is the capital of our country, and it occupies a central position in everything we do. Its institutions are protected under a prior agreement between us and the Israeli Government. Netanyahu should not close our offices and use this as a tool of pressure to ease the siege imposed by his government on us. [end recording]

In the same context, the Netanyahu government adopted a policy far removed from peace, in accordance with a new Israeli strategy that was rejected by the Palestinians, the Arabs, and some countries. However, the National Authority adopted a strategy intended to implement the peace agreements between the Palestinian and Israeli sides under international supervision in order to achieve Palestinian rights and objectives.

Commenting on this Palestinian strategy, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, said:

[Begin Sha'th recording] The Palestinian Authority [PA] launched efforts even before the new Israeli Government was elected to end the siege, effect an Israeli withdrawal from Hebron, and start the final status negotiations. Since a new Israeli Government was formed, the PA has been working day and night to achieve these objectives. In addition, the PA wants to preserve the peace process as a whole. In light of the statements of the new Israeli Government, we have acted at the Palestinian, Israeli, Arab, and international levels. I believe that the international position is positive, despite the disgraceful spectacle of the members of the U.S. Congress applauding a prime minister who is challenging the peace process and the conditions that are guaranteed by the United States. It is a disgraceful spectacle because one sees members of the U.S. parliament buying their votes by sacrificing their country's interests and the interests of peace worldwide. In spite of this, the U.S. Government officially, in its statement at the G-7 summit and in its other statements, supports land for peace, supports Resolution 242, and supports the continuation of the peace process in accordance with the agreed-on foundations. [end recording] [passage omitted]

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Palestinian Affairs: Hamas—'Fire Will Consume the Ruthless Occupiers'

TA1407151496 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 14 Jul 96 p 6

[Report by Hanan Schlein]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] "Our valiant fighters are only waiting for the order, and then fire will consume the ruthless occupiers who step on our toes around Gaza and Hebron." This was stated by a senior Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] source in Gaza over the weekend in reaction to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's comments in the United States.

The source added that senior members of 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, the Hamas military wing, intend to perpetrate large-scale attacks on Israeli territory. He noted that the attacks will be directed against Jerusalem and the settlements around Gaza and Hebron. "Nothing will stop us from liberating our lands and our jailed fighters," he said.

The source added: "The Israeli people elected a radical leader who is surrounded by a team of assassins like Sharon and Refa'el Eytan, who murdered young children in Lebanon and Gaza. We must not trust the Netanyahu government." [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: PLO Executive Committee, Cabinet Issue Joint Statement

JN1307200396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At the end of a joint meeting between the PLO Executive Committee and the Council of Ministers under the chairmanship of President Yasir 'Arafat, the conferees stressed the seriousness of encroaching on international resolutions and their legitimacy. They said they consider any deviation from these resolutions a deviation from the peace process that was launched in Madrid based on former U.S. President George Bush's initiative and in accordance with international resolutions, led by UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

A statement issued at the end of the meeting urges the international community and the cosponsors of the peace process to confront any attempt to circumvent international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle, because restoring the territories and achieving peace are two inseparable issues. The statement notes that the withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from all the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories to the 4 June 1967 borders and the full implementation of international legitimacy resolutions are the conditions for achieving peace.

The conferees discussed the seriousness of confiscating land and expanding settlements and building new ones, given the illegitimacy of such actions, which totally contradict the signed agreements and conflict with all international resolutions in a way that threatens the entire peace process.

The statement issued at the end of the joint meeting adds that the Palestinians' adherence to the agreements signed in Oslo between the Palestinian and Israeli sides requires the Israeli Government's commitment to protecting the peace process and maintaining the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights to Holy Jerusalem. The conferees stressed the need to link talk about the Israeli military siege against the Palestinian people and the economic situation to the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights based on international legitimacy and the signed agreements.

The statement stresses that an independent Palestinian state with Holy Jerusalem as its capital is not an act of kindness from anyone, but is our people's natural right, the price of which is the blood of martyrs throughout 50 years of struggle. The statement adds that an independent state is the firm basis for a Palestinian-Israeli peace and that the new Israeli policies will only sow chaos, instability, and violence and strike at the entire peace process.

During the joint meeting, the conferees discussed the occupation, the military redeployment in Hebron, opening safe passages and international passages, and releasing male and female prisoners and detainees. They considered these requirements to which the Israeli Government should be committed and stressed that postponing or evading these requirements contradicts the peace agreements.

The conferees renewed their call for a five-way meeting that includes Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine with the aim of adopting a negotiating strategy based on the resolutions of the recent Arab summit in Cairo, formulating a united Arab stand, as well as activating and continuing contacts at the Arab, Islamic, and international levels to mobilize support for the Palestinian stand on the peace process.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Asfur Denounces Plan To Increase Number of Settlers

JN1507064196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Hasan 'Asfur, Legislative Council [LC] member and director general of the Negotiations Department, denounced an announcement by the so-called Jewish Settlements Council in the

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Palestinian territories of a plan to double the number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza to approximately 300,000 settlers within the next three years.

In statements to the PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY, WAFA, 'Asfur said that settlement building is the biggest challenge facing the peace process, especially in the next stage. He stressed that the Palestinian people and their authority will not remain silent over these serious violations of the peace process.

An Israeli media source had said that the so-called Jewish Settlements Council in the Palestinian territories is preparing a plan to build new settlements and expand existing ones. The source added the plan includes building eight new settlements and turning military positions into settlements with the aim of increasing the number of settlers in the Palestinian territories to 300,000 settlers. [passage omitted]

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Algeria

Algeria: Meetings on National Dialogue To Resume 15 Jul

LD1307113196 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] To deepen the national dialogue on issues that concern the nation, the multilateral meetings with the partners in the national dialogue — including political parties, organizations, and associations — will start 15 July.

This new round of dialogue is the final stage of the meetings with the presidency. It also falls within the framework of completing bilateral meetings, which started on 6 April, to examine the means to be adopted for consecrating democracy and pluralism.

These meetings, in which many political parties expressed the intention to take part, come after informing the general public about the general trends on the presidential memorandum.

Algeria: Zitouni Reportedly Removed From GIA Leadership

LD1507092496 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 0600 GMT 15 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Djamel Zitouni is reported to have been removed from the leadership of the GIA [Armed Islamic Group], the most radical of the Algerian Islamic groups. The communique which has announced this change has not been authenticated yet. Other leaders of the GIA are also reported as having been removed. They apparently belong to the hardline faction of the Algerian Islamist movement.

Algeria: New Head of Presidential Office Appointed

LD1307205096 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today President Liamine Zeroual appointed Mr. Youcef Yousfi as head of the presidential office.

Youcef Yousfi is an engineer in the chemical industry and a holder of a doctorate in physics. He started his career at the university as a lecturer at the National Polytechnical School, then at the Houari Boumedienne University of Science and Technology. He also held the post of technical adviser at the ministry of industry and energy and the post of director of Sonatrach after having served as deputy director in charge of marketing at the same company. Yousfi was also the chairman of the board of the social fund of the mining industry, irrigation and energy services. Yousfi was born on 2 October 1941. He is married with three children.

Egypt

Egypt: 'Arafat Arrives, Attends Air Force Graduation With Mubarak

NC1407103596 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, supreme commander of the Armed Forces, attended the graduation of the Air Force Academy's 63d class today. Visiting Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and senior Egyptian officials and the commanders of the Armed Forces' branches also attended the graduation. Arriving at the Air Force Academy, his excellency the president was received by Field Marshal Husayn Tantawi, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, minister of defense and war production.

After the national anthem was played the ceremony began with an aerial parade by training aircraft. This was followed by a march past by Air Force Academy cadets led by banner bearers.

After the graduation President Mubarak met Palestinian President 'Arafat at the Air Force Academy headquarters in Bilbays. Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, was present at the meeting.

Egypt: Mubarak, 'Arafat Confer on Regional Developments, Peace Process

NC1407131896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1253 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Jul (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat stated that he and President Husni Mubarak today discussed developments in the region and ways to boost and maintain the peace process. In a statement today after arriving in the al-Sharqiyah Governorate, he said he participated in a graduation ceremony today in Bilbis for 63 Egyptian pilots in response to a kind invitation from President Mubarak. He stressed that the Egyptian Air Force is an asset, not only for Egypt, but for the entire Arab nation. 'Arafat was accompanied on his trip from Bilbis to Cairo by Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs.

Egypt: 'Arafat Departs After Talks With Mubarak

NC1507083896 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 15 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat left Cairo this morning after a two-day visit to Egypt, during which he was received by President

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Muhammad Husni Mubarak. During the visit they discussed developments in the region and affirmed support for the peace process and preserving its continuation. To see 'Arafat off at Cairo airport was Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry undersecretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs.

Egypt: Musa To Attend Damascus Declaration Countries' Meeting in Muscat

NC1307110396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0915 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 13 Jul (MENA)—Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa left Cairo at noon today on his way to Muscat to attend meetings of the Damascus Declaration countries which will start in the Omani capital later today. 'Amr Musa stated before his departure from Cairo that in addition to attending meetings of the Damascus Declaration countries' foreign ministers, he will also chair the meetings of the Egyptian-Omani follow-up committee which will be held on the sidelines of the ministerial meeting of the Damascus Declaration countries.

He said he will also continue Egyptian-Syrian and Egyptian-Saudi coordination, as well as Egyptian coordination with the Arabian Gulf states in general. He added that all these extensive meetings and contacts in Muscat will follow up the results of the Cairo summit.

'Amr Musa is accompanied by a delegation including Ambassador Badr Hammam, assistant foreign minister for Arab affairs, and Ambassador Nabil Fahmi, political advisor to the foreign minister.

Egypt: Musa Comments on Status of Peace Process, U.S. Visit

NC1207125096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1115 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 12 Jul (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa stated that President Husni Mubarak's visit to Turkey yesterday [11 July] heralds the beginning of a stage of political and diplomatic moves aimed at salvaging and boosting the peace process and keeping regional developments under control. In a statement today, Musa said that the foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration countries will begin meeting for two days in Muscat tomorrow, Saturday [13 July]. The ministers will discuss the current Arab situation, cooperation among the member states of the Damascus Declaration in various spheres, and referring the joint Arab action document to the Arab League to be submitted to all members in accordance with the resolutions of the recent Arab summit in Cairo.

Musa said that he will pay a two-day visit to Russia on Monday and will convey a message from President Husni Mubarak to Russian President Boris Yeltsin. He will also hold talks with his Russian counterpart Yevgeniy Primakov on the importance of commitment to the resolutions of the Madrid Conference and the UN resolutions to bolster the peace efforts in view of Russia's role as one of the co-sponsors of the peace process. He said that attempts to explain again the principles on which the peace process were based require a specific and unequivocal international stand.

Musa said that President Mubarak will pay a working visit to the United States at the end of this month to meet with U.S. President Bill Clinton and other officials in the U.S. Administration and Congress. He will hold intensive talks on the current need to concert all efforts to salvage and advance the peace process. Musa said that prior to President Mubarak's visit, he will pay a week-long visit to the United States and will tour a number of U.S. states and meet with a number of Egyptian and American businessmen to encourage investment in Egypt. He noted that he will also discuss the relations between Egypt and the United States, the situation in the Middle East, and the peace process as part of preparations for President Mubarak's visit.

Musa stressed that the bases on which agreement was reached regarding the peace process do not need reconsideration; rather, reconsideration or any attempt to explain them again may negatively and seriously affect the peace process itself. Concluding his statement, Musa said that he submitted to President Mubarak, during the expanded cabinet meeting yesterday, a detailed report on developments in the peace process amid the new developments and changes expressed by the parties to the peace process and in light of the UN, regional, and Arab resolutions which constitute terms of reference for the peace process, particularly the resolutions of the recent African summit relating to the Middle East and Palestine, the EU summit in Florence, and the G-7 summit in Lyons.

Egypt: Egyptian Envoy to Yemen Comments on Explosion Near Embassy

NC1407064396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0554 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sanaa, 14 Jul (MENA)—Egyptian Ambassador in Sanaa 'Adil Sabri restated that the explosion near the Egyptian Embassy last night targeted the embassy. Accordingly, further security precautions must be adopted, he added.

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The Egyptian ambassador said that following the blast he met Yemeni Interior Ministry officials to discuss the circumstances of the incident and adopt all measures necessary to prevent such incidents in future, pointing out that the Yemeni authorities responded to all the embassy's demands in this regard. The ambassador reiterated that all embassy staff members are well.

The ambassador denied that he made media or press statements last night. He refuted reports broadcast abroad attributed to embassy officials. It was rather difficult to contact the ambassador or any embassy officials last night in view of their meeting with Interior Ministry officials—it lasted until late.

Meanwhile, no official Yemeni statement has so far been released nor has any side claimed responsibility for the blast.

Egypt: Israeli Spy Reportedly Arrested in Cairo

NC1207140096 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 8 Jul p 1

[Report by 'Abd-al-Fattah 'Abd-al-Mun'im: "Israeli Spy Arrested in al-Duqqi"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A new Israeli spy has been caught by the Egyptian security services. The incident came only a few weeks after a court sentenced the al-Mansurah spy, 'Abd-al-Malik 'Abd-al- Mun'in Hamid, to life with hard labor after convicting him of spying for Israel.

The security services last week arrested the new spy, Makram Jirjis Bulus, 21, an employee in the supplies department of a hotel in al-Duqqi, al-Jizah.

AL-'ARABI learned that coincidence led to the arrest of the new spy, who joined the hotel several months ago. While hotel security manager Jamal 'Ali Muharram was checking the various departments, he saw a recorder of an unknown type. Fearing it was booby-trapped, he examined it and was surprised to see that the machine contained a cassette containing an unusual code that he could not decipher. Investigation showed that the recorder was the property of Makram Bulus, who admitted ownership but could not explain its contents. The hotel management immediately informed the al-Duqqi Police Station (Case No. 5/h al-Duqqi). A force from the station arrested the defendant, who was referred to a high-level security service, where detailed investigations were conducted. The second surprise came when it was revealed that the code was used for communicating with the Israeli intelligence service (the Mosad) [parentheses as published], for which Bulus was working. He was preparing to send sensitive information about some vital targets in Greater Cairo. It was revealed that the Israeli intelligence service recruited the defendant several months ago and that (the Mosad) provided him with a special recorder to tape the secret codes he was trained to use by the enemy's intelligence service. [passage omitted]

Egypt: AL-AHRAM Urges U.S. To Clarify Stand on Peace Process

NC1407064696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0518 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Jul (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AHRAM has urged the U.S. Administration to adopt a clear position on the peace process, to implement practically every U.S. concept, and to avoid repeating ambiguous diplomatic expressions. In its editorial today, the newspaper says that the current issue rests in the U.S. position on the Madrid settlement plan. It adds that if the U.S. Administration wants to forsake this issue let it announce it frankly, because the Arabs would then start preparing something that runs counter to this.

AL-AHRAM asks if the support voiced by the U.S. Congress for Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu following the declaration of his tough positions means an implicit approval of his meager words. The paper adds: What concerns us is the U.S. position, because the United States has been the principal sponsor of the peace process since the Madrid conference. AL-AHRAM asks: Will the United States forsake this issue only to please the Jewish community, disregarding all its interests in the Arab region and its image worldwide?

Egypt: AL-AHRAM Welcomes U.S. Stand on Israeli Settlements

NC1507070196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0510 GMT 15 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 15 Jul (MENA)—AL-AHRAM welcomed the U.S. official statement to the Egyptian Government that Washington has not changed its stand on the issue of settlements, which represents an obstacle on the road to peace, or on the basis for the peace settlement agreed upon during the Madrid Conference. In its editorial today, the paper maintains that welcome alone is not enough to guarantee a continuous firm U.S. stand concerning commitment to the Madrid resolutions and the rejection of the building of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land. This is because no one can guarantee that an official in President Clinton's administration will not reverse the U.S. stand with a slip of the tongue, as part of the feverish one-upmanship surrounding the upcoming elections in the United States.

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AL-AHRAM stresses that neither Egyptian diplomacy nor the Arab governments have failed to play their role in full. The paper urges all the Arabs and the world, from now and until the end of the U.S. elections, to put pressure on Washington so that U.S. administration officials will not find any pretext to retreat from this stand.

Libya

Libya: Statement Defends al-Qadhdhafi's Flight to Egypt

LD1307153696 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1132 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 13 Jul (JANA) — The Great Jamahiriyah's mission to the United Nations has issued a statement on the press statement given by the chief of the so-called sanctions committee, in which he alleged that the flights of the brother leader of the revolution [Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi] aboard a Libyan Arab Airlines' airplane from Tripoli International Airport to Cairo International Airport and back were a violation of the unjust sanctions imposed on the Great Jamahiriyah by the Security Council. The following is the text of the statement:

With reference to the press statement of 5 July by the head of the sanctions committee, formed according to Resolution 748/1992, in which he claimed that the brother leader of the revolution's flight to Cairo to attend the Arab summit on 22 June and his return flight to Tripoli were a violation of the air embargo imposed on the Jamahiriyah by the Security Council, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah's mission to the United Nations would like to explain that while the Great Jamahiriyah abides by the Security Council's resolutions and respects international charters, it does not consider the use of Libyan Arab Airlines for the movement of the brother leader of the revolution or the performance of religious rituals a violation of the unjust air embargo imposed on it. This practice is related to the sovereignty of the Libyan state, which is a sacred right and is supported in the UN Charter and all international conventions.

The sanctions committee should have refrained from discussing the issue of sovereignty because the mere discussion of it is an attempt to infringe upon the sovereignty of an independent UN member state. This is forbidden by the UN Charter and all the other international conventions.

The sanctions committee should have directed the attention of the Security Council to the illegitimacy of the continuation of the unjust sanctions imposed on the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah. The continuation of these sanctions causes massive losses to the Libyan Arab people and the neighboring people, especially after the Great Jamahiriyah has done all that the Security Council demanded of it. What remains is the issue of naming a neutral place for the trial of the Lockerbie suspects. This is the case for which the Arab League submitted a practical proposal. This proposal was accepted by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah and supported by all international and regional bodies. The lack of response to it by some Security Council members is unacceptable obstinacy to most of the international body because it contradicts the principles of the United Nations, which advocate solving problems between states through peaceful means. It does not serve international peace and security because it maintains the areas of tension. This is a downright contradiction in the principal task assigned to the Security Council.

Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi, Mubarak Discuss Regional, Bilateral Issues

LD1407092896 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0705 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 14 Jul — A telephone contact took place between the brother leader of the revolution [Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi] and President Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, during which the recent developments in the Arab region and relations between the two brotherly countries were discussed.

Libya: Diplomatic Source on Prospects for Closing UTA Affair

MM1207105996 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 12 Jul 96 p 6

[Report by Ashraf al-Faqiyy in Cairo: "Libya: We Have Given Bruguiere All the Help Needed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A Libyan diplomatic source in Cairo has said that his country has given French Investigating Judge Jean-Louis Bruguiere all the help needed in order to close the file on the accusation that Libya was involved in blowing up the UTA plane in 1989.

Bruguiere is currently in Tripoli to question four Libyans, including a relative of Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's, who are accused by the French judiciary of involvement in blowing up the plane.

The source told AL-HAYAH that Libyan-Egyptian contacts are being held with a view to putting to the Security Council a proposal to end the sanctions imposed on Libya since April 1995 and, should the Security Council refuse to end the sanctions, resorting to

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the UN General Assembly, particularly since the Arab states (at the Cairo summit) and the African states (at the Yaounde summit) adopted resolutions to that effect.

The source added: "The French are serious about ending the UTA affair, and we hope that the Americans and British will try just as seriously and agree to having the Libyan suspects in the Lockerbie affair tried by a Scottish court at the International Court of Justice headquarters in the Hague, in accordance with the Arab League's proposal."

He criticized "the U.S. control over the Security Council" and called for "the need to get rid of this domination," pointing out that it is inadmissible that one state should control the destiny of the world. As an example, he gave the U.S. position on a second term for Butrus-Ghali, the Egyptian UN secretary general, despite the fact that the majority of states agree on his nomination for a second term.

Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi's Son Said Involved in Tripoli Clashes

MM1507103096 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Jul 96 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Conflicting Reports About Victims of Disturbances in Libya; al-Ittihad and al-Ahli Dissolved"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Libyan sources have cited eyewitnesses as saying that the disturbances occurred when Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's son, al-Sa'idi, and his guards intervened in a quarrel between supporters of the two Tripoli-based sports clubs [al-Ahli and al-Ittihad]. The sources said that al-Sa'idi intervened in his capacity as chairman of the al—Ittihad club, and that his guards fired at supporters, who escalated the situation, shouting antiregime slogans.

The Libyan sources said some supporters retaliated and opened fire. The sources said units from the special forces were deployed in Tripoli streets after the demonstrators had taken to the streets and started to throw stones at cars used by foreign residents and to harass passersby, smashing the windows of some cars. The sources said the special forces restored calm on Tripoli streets.

It is worth noting that this is the first time the Libyan capital has witnessed violent incidents. While Banghazi experiences confrontations from time to time, Tripoli still enjoys relative calm. [passage omitted]

Libya: JANA Editor Sees Damascus Declaration as Divisive

LD1407094696 Tripoli JANA in English 0818 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, Nasser [July] 14, JANA — Reports said that a meeting of the Arab member states of the Damascus Declaration yesterday began its proceedings at Muscat in Oman.

JANA's editor for Arab affairs commented on this meeting starting it with a question on why this Damascus Declaration consists of this group of Arab countries and not other Arab countries if it was not meant to divide the Arab nation towards setting up blocs within this nation dividing it more than closing its ranks and fragmenting more than bringing it together. [as received]

The editor added that confining the declaration to particular Arab countries and their meeting in this manner imposes a new reality leading other Arab countries outside this declaration to form another bloc in a counter front.

The editor concluded his commentary by stressing that this sort of declaration does not serve the united objective and destiny of this nation which is facing various challenges imposed by its enemies who are plotting against it and working fiercely to entrench the reality of division amongst the people of this nation and fragment Arab efforts in a bid to implement the hostile plans aimed at the annihilation of the whole Arab homeland. The editor asserted that the Arab nation, vis a vis this serious situation which is threatening its survival, was in dire need for mobilising all its efforts and resources so as to achieve its total unity being the sole way to meet all challenges and face all dangers.

Libya: Opposition on Prison Mutiny, 'Major' Anti-Islamist Action

NC1407191096 Paris AFP in English 1711 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, July 14 (AFP) — Eight political detainees were killed in a week-long mutiny at a prison near Tripoli, the Libyan opposition in Cairo said Sunday [14 July] accusing Libya of launching a huge crackdown on Islamic militants.

"Eight political detainees died during a revolt at the Abu Salim prison which lasted a week after breaking out on July 5," said an opposition leader, who asked to remain anonymous.

He said the mutiny "started when dozens of political detainees went on hunger strike to protest against their

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poor treatment. The prison authorities tried in vain to calm them down before shooting at them, killing eight."

Meanwhile "around 30 prisoners managed to escape" and "the security forces launched a huge manhunt," he added.

He said Abu Salim contains "thousands of political detainees, notably those implicated in a coup d'etat attempt in 1993 as well as many students and Islamic militants."

Opposition sources said last Monday that a prison break had occurred at Abu Salim, but they gave no details of casualties or how many escaped.

The official JANA news agency said Friday the Libyan air force was conducting large-scale exercises using live ammunition along the country's Mediterranean coast, but the opposition source, quoting eyewitnesses, said the exercises were a cover for a major operation against Islamic militants.

He said the operation came amid more than three years of clashes between government troops and the armed opposition. "We are concerned, as many people could have been killed without anybody knowing," he added, saying he had no information about casualties.

JANA, in a rare statement announcing military maneuvers, said the exercises were "against a mock enemy invasion in the al-Mukhtara region along the Libyan coast."

Three Moslem militants, a policeman and a civilian were killed in clashes in the Libyan city of Banghazi last Sunday, travellers arriving at the Egyptian border told AFP on Monday.

The region of Banghazi, 700 kilometers (420 miles) east of Tripoli, has been the site of several clashes between Moslem militants and police since the beginning of the year.

The biggest clash in the Banghazi area came last March when 26 people died in the Darnah region in violence amid a police manhunt for several hundred opposition Islamists who had escaped from al- Kwayfiyah prison outside Banghazi.

Tripoli said the deaths came in a security crackdown on drug dealers.

Libya: Air Force Starts Coastal Maneuvers With Live Ammunition

LD1207114496 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1055 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 12 Jul (JANA) — The Libyan Arab Air Force has started maneuvers with live ammunition, which will last for a few days, on a mock hostile landing on a selected area on the Libyan coasts in order to destroy and defeat it. All types of military aircraft are participating in these maneuvers.

Pilots have hit their allocated targets with precision and competence... which proves the strong fighting capabilities they have reached. [ellipses as received]

Libya: Investigation of Stadium Incidents Begins

LD1407225196 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1931 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tripoli, 14 Jul (JANA) — Brother Muhammad Mahmud Hijazi, secretary of the General People's Committee for Justice and Public Security, has declared that the Attorney General and four members of the Public Prosecution Office have been asked to conduct an investigation into the incidents that took place in the Sports City in Tripoli during a football match between al-Ittihad and al-Ahly of Tripoli. He added that the necessary legal measures had been taken and that the Public Prosecution had already started the investigation.

The Social Popular Commands in Tripoli-Center, Suq al-Jama'a, Hay al-Andalus, and Abu Salim held emergency and extraordinary meetings yesterday in implementation of the statutes of the Social Popular Command. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Sudan: Al-Bashir Views OAU Summit, Talks With African Leaders

EA1307183596 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1917 GMT 11 Jul 96

[Interview with Sudanese President 'Umar al-Bashir by unidentified correspondents at Khartoum Airport on 11 July — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] Mr. President, the summit discussed numerous issues. We would like to (?know) the main points.

[Al-Bashir] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Praise be to God and blessing and peace be upon the messenger of God. The most important thing in this summit is that African leaders, I mean, they dealt with the situation of Africa and the new international changes and the attempt to marginalize Africa. [sentence as heard] They concentrated on the importance of African cooperation and solving African problems, particularly the areas of contention in Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Angola. [passage omitted]

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At this summit, we were also able to hold numerous meetings with the heads of state and government and leaders of delegations. We gave them a clear explanation of conditions in Sudan, particularly the peace charter.

[Correspondent] Asked about the most important thing in Sudan's address to the summit, the president answered:

[Al-Bashir] We spoke before the summit on [words indistinct] Africa and the importance of African solidarity. We spoke on conditions in Sudan, the democratic transformation, and the ongoing peace efforts in Sudan. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] His excellency was asked whether he had met Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi.

[Al-Bashir] We met the Ethiopian president. We discussed all issues concerning the two countries. There was a very clear desire for coexistence and good-neighbor relations and for people to find a way out of all the problems they are faced with, and for a move to contain all the problems. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] On his return to Khartoum, his excellency stopped over in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic, and met President Patasse.

[Al-Bashir] Naturally, we stopped over on our way back in Bangui at the kind invitation of President Patasse. While there, we dealt with the results of the previous tripartite summit and ways of implementing what was agreed at the previous summit. We agreed to hold the next summit, God willing, in Khartoum soon. We let President Patasse, by virtue of the fact that he is the chairman of the summit, consult Chadian President Deby on the date of the summit in Khartoum. We also reassured ourselves of security conditions in the Central African Republic, particularly after the recent events there. And praise be to God, the situation is reassuring and security is stable in the Central African Republic. We also thanked him for his efforts in supporting Sudan on the issue submitted to the UN Security Council.

[Correspondent] On the Malawian initiative between Sudan and Uganda, the president said:

[Al-Bashir] The Ugandan president did not attend the summit. But we met the Malawian president and we agreed on activating the initiative.

Western Sahara

Western Sahara: Polisario Threatens To Resume Armed Struggle

LD1307124396 Paris Radio France International in French 0630 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] For the second time since the electoral registration process — expected to lead to a long-delayed referendum on self-determination — was suspended in May, the Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] is again threatening to resume their armed struggle in Western Sahara. Although it was the UN secretary general who had recommended suspending the registration of voters, it is to him that the Polisario has again turned. According to Polisario President Mohamed Abdelaziz, only UN action can now head off renewed fighting.

[Begin Abdelaziz recording] Morocco is blocking every move. Morocco wants to transform the UN peace plan into nothing more than a monitoring of the cease-fire. I have met here [place not specified] with the UN secretary general, and we spoke about the situation. He told me he was thinking of launching a new initiative in the near future. We are awaiting the UN secretary general's next move. In any case, if it turns out that the Security Council and the secretary general fail to assume their responsibilities and fail to enforce observance by the Moroccan side of the UN peace plan for Western Sahara, then the only course of action that remains for Saharans is to resume the fight to defend their right to self-determination and independence. [end recording]

Western Sahara: Polisario Sends Message to UN Security Council

LD1307140096 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a message to the president of the UN Security Council, delivered to him by Ahmed Boukhari, Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] representative at the United Nations, the Polisario asked the Security Council to take the necessary measures, particularly in these critical circumstances, to restore credibility and trust in the peace process in Western Sahara.

This message comes in reply to King Hassan II's recent statements, who, according to the content of the message, has not ceased to repeat the Moroccan choice of the policy fait accompli.

The Polisario sees that these statements reflected the intransigence of the known Moroccan stance, which affected the UN credibility and ability in performing

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its mission in Western Sahara in accordance with the settlement plan endorsed by the Security Council.

On the other hand, the Polisario recorded an increase in the acts of political suppression in the occupied Western Saharan territory, accompanied by several arrests and alleged trials of Saharan citizens.

The Polisario pointed out that the UN special representative in Western Sahara has been informed of the situation but has refused to take any measure, claiming that he is not qualified and that the recent UN resolution does not contain issues on human rights.

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Bahrain

Bahrain: Helicopters Reportedly Used Against Civilians

JN1507110196 (Internet) Voice of Bahrain WWW in English 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Helicopters were used yesterday, 13 July, against unarmed civilians demonstrating in Sitrah following a week-long clashes between the foreign-staffed security forces and the people of Bahrain. Karranah was also the scene of clashes while several towns and villages remaining under virtual siege. Demonstrations resurfaced across the country following the decision of the ruling family to pass death sentences against three innocent people after a flawed trial that was concluded on 1 July. More than fifty witnesses testified that the defendants had nothing to do with the alleged crime of burning a restaurant. The witnesses included a British manager at the aluminum smelter ALBA who testified that one of the defendants was at work when the crime took place. Lawyers have visited the justice minister and wrote a letter to the Amir requesting him to refrain from killing innocent citizens. A group of personalities attempted to visit the Amir, but all attempts have failed and it seems that the ruling family has decided to enter into full-scale confrontation that will not be to the interests of the country, though it may help vent some locked-in tribal hatred and prejudice against the people.

Prison cells are packed and diseases are spreading. More British, Jordanian and Pakistani officers are being recruited to implement repression campaigns. Sick rapists, such as Muhammad Sa'id (a Pakistani), are being used to torture the young prisoners and indecently assault them. The arrest of women and the flagrant abuse of all human rights are fueling more clashes.

People who were forced to advertise their names against their own people are now speaking-out and explaining how the information and labour ministers published their names without their consents. Members of leading families are campaigning against those individuals who attempted to stain their names by going along with the government campaign to condemn the popular uprising. Some individuals with self-interests have received 500 dinars each as gifts for condemning the opposition.

The labeling of the opposition as an extremist Shia group is now losing its desired effect. This is not the first time that the government attempted to divide the nation and blame the outside. In 1975, the same security forces claimed that they were facing "a communist plot" that was "receiving arms from Eden". The security forces claimed that the State Security Law would only be used "against communists". It was clear for the opposition that the State Security Law was a tool of repression that will be used against all the people of Bahrain. Indeed, five years later, it was the turn of the Islamists to suffer from this hated law. Now, the government is saying to many people that the recently introduced "exceptional measures" will only be used against the Shia. The fact of the matter is that the government does not care about a person being a Shia or a Sunni as long as that person accepts dictatorship. The "exceptional measures" are being used now against the Shia community for political expediency in the same way as in 1975 the leftists groups were singled out for persecution. The exceptional measures and the illegal political structures which the ruling family are attempting to install are threats to the whole nation, their dignity and rights. The opposition has no option but to steadfast and continue its peaceful civil resistance campaigns.

Kuwait

Kuwait: Government Says Will Guarantee 'Safety' of Apostate

MS1207104196 London THE TIMES in English 12 Jul 96 p 14

[Report by Eve-Ann Prentice: "Christian Convert To Leave Kuwait"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Robert Hussein, the Kuwaiti who fears for his life after converting from Islam to Christianity, plans to live in America after being promised a new passport by the emirate's authorities.

Mr Hussein's identity papers and passport were stolen from his house after an Islamic court ruled that he was an apostate.

Islamic lawyers said he should be killed. He was forcibly divorced from his wife, cannot see his two young children and his building business is in ruins.

After a deluge of protests from Christian groups in Britain and America, the Kuwaiti Government yesterday said that it guaranteed Mr Hussein's safety.

"As to what has been said about this Kuwaiti citizen being subjected to persecution and death threats due to his conversion from Islam to Christianity, this is baseless," government legal advisers told the KUWAIT TIMES.

But Dr Simon Qadri [as published], of Christian Solidarity International in London, said: "They have not provided police protection, as they promised, or discouraged the fundamentalists ... they cannot afford to anger the fundamentalists."

Mr Hussein, speaking from hiding yesterday, said: "I am moving from one place to another even as we speak.

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They cannot make statements saying I am safe when I know I am not. They promised to give me a new passport, then keep asking me to come back to their offices again and again. I have told them ... people will see me coming and going."

The Foreign Office is monitoring the case of Barnabus Benjamin, a British pilot who resigned from Kuwait Airlines in protest at the Islamic court ruling and who was held after putting up posters in Kuwait City about Mr Hussein.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Officials Say Dhahran Bomber's Getaway Car Found

NC1407151996 Paris AFP in English
1521 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Muscat, July 14 (AFP) — Saudi investigators have found the white getaway car used by the bombers who carried out an attack on a military compound in the kingdom last month which killed 19 US airmen, officials said at a meeting of Gulf leaders here Sunday [14 July].

The car, a Chevrolet Caprice, had been stolen several weeks' before the June 25 blast, said officials speaking on condition of anonymity.

The vehicle had been repainted from its original grey to white, the officials said. They were unable to say when the car had been found. The explosives-packed truck which destroyed part of the US military compound at al-Khubar, near Dhahran, in eastern Saudi Arabia, had earlier been stolen from a building company.

Foreign ministers from eight Arab countries ended their two-day meeting in Muscat on Sunday.

Saudi Arabia: Officials Silent on Claim That Bombers' Car Found

MM1507103596 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
15 Jul 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Al-Khubar Attack Perpetrators' Getaway Car Reportedly Found"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh — Saudi security officials declined yesterday to comment on reports that Saudi investigators have found the car used by the perpetrators of the al-Khubar attack — a white Chevrolet Caprice. Prince Muhammad Bin-Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, amir of the Eastern Province, told AL-HAYAH over the telephone: "I have no information about or comment on the matter." However, Saudi citizens have recently noted the suspension of the scrutiny and inspections to which cars, especially U.S.-made Chevrolet Caprice models, which the perpetrators reportedly used to flee the scene, were subjected — which reinforces the belief that the car has been found. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia: Defense Minister on Security, Yemen Border Talks

LD1407103396 Riyadh SPA in Arabic
2305 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 13 July — His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation, and inspector-general affirmed that the proceedings of the Saudi-Yemeni Committee in charge of the borders were still going on.

He added that reports on disagreements in the committee were unfounded. Replying to a question on whether the proceedings of the committees will be delayed because of reports on the existence of disagreements, his highness said: "On the contrary, the committees are working and I told my brothers in Yemen that we are ready to go there, as a higher committee, at the end of next August or September and that even if there are obstacles, God forbid, facing the joint committees that emanate from the higher committee, the joint committees are capable of surmounting them in the best way possible."

His highness said: "If we do not find a way out, we will go back to the higher political leadership." His highness expressed his hope that matters will not reach this level.

This came in a news conference given by the second deputy prime minister after he presided over the ceremony of the 54th batch of officers at the King 'Abd-al-'Aziz military academy in Riyadh.

Replying to a question on the Saudi mediation between the brotherly states of Bahrain and Qatar, he said: "First, the Saudi mediation is a request from the brothers and what is important for us, as the custodian of the two holy mosques said, is that the Qatar and Bahrain are satisfied with this mediation."

His highness added: "But the mediation has not started officially and it is necessary to have discussions between countries in the Gulf all together, hoping that together we will achieve what is best for the two countries."

Replying to a question on the explosion in Dahran and on whether the investigation team has gathered information leading to the nationality of those behind the explosion and the side which is backing them, his highness said that the investigation is going on. He added that the announcement now of any move would

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not be in the interest of the issue. Until we reach a result, silence, at this stage, is essential to allow the experts to work in the interest of the issue with the aim of discovering the demons without saying anything prematurely.

Addressing the graduates, His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz said: "I pray to the Almighty to guide them to the right path and continue the good work they have started today in the armed forces".

Asked by someone to say a few words to reassure the citizens and the foreign residents in the kingdom, as the security situation is the concern of everybody, His Highness said: "The greatest of assurances is the presence of the Holy Kaaba in this country, the implementation of the Shari'ah law, and the five daily prayers. These are the things that reassure anybody, be they Muslim or non-Muslim."

His Highness added: "Thus turning to the Almighty to ask for reassurance is better than turning to His subjects to seek reassurance. We are continuing in our path serving our glorious religion and our citizens, and these are the main things that bring reassurance and security to the heart of the citizen".

Regarding reports that the friendly forces might be moved from their housing compounds, His Highness said: "If we moved them from their homes this means that we would provide them with alternative accommodation. This is not true. Law and order are respected and the incidents that are now taking place in our country are a fraction of a million of what is happening elsewhere."

Yemen

Yemen: Salih Calls For Summit With Saudi Arabia on Border Dispute

JN1507100896 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] As part of his inspection tour of the Ta'izz Governorate, Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, met with the brother members of the Executive office, the ulema, tribal chiefs, social figures, and leaders of parties, political organizations, popular groupings, and representatives of the youth sector, writers, intellectuals, workers and women in the governorate's headquarters today. [passage omitted]

Speaking about Yemeni-Saudi relations and the work of the committees established between the two countries under the memorandum of understanding, the brother president said that our country is eager to seek a final and satisfactory solution to the border issue between the two countries on the basis of the principle that no party should be harmed.

The president added: From this premise, we stressed the need to accelerate the committees' work and overcome the slow pace with which they are carrying out their work through convening a summit meeting or through a meeting of the higher committee in Sanaa to expedite the committees' work and achieve the goals set for them. He pointed out that there are parties on both sides which benefit from keeping the Saudi-Yemeni border file open and maintaining tension between the two countries as this realizes their own interests and provides these parties with material gains at the expense of the two fraternal neighbor people.

Yemen: Explosion Near Egyptian Embassy Causes No Casualties

NC1307192796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1908 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sanaa, 13 Jul (MENA)—An explosion occurred near the Egyptian Embassy building in Sanaa tonight. It caused no causalities or damage to the embassy building. The explosion, which took place at 2100 Cairo time [1800 GMT], shattered the windows of neighboring buildings.

Criminal detective agency officials said it was caused by an explosive device planted near the embassy building, adding that an investigation into the incident has begun.

Yemen: Source Suggests 'Separatist Elements' Behind Embassy Blast

NC1307205696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2041 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sanaa, 13 Jul (MENA)—A responsible source at the Yemeni Interior Ministry has confirmed that tonight's explosion near the Egyptian Embassy in Sanaa has caused no human or material losses.

In a statement to MENA's correspondent in Sanaa, the source accused "suspect parties" of carrying out such acts to cause chaos and confusion for the Yemeni security authorities, especially because this blast occurred in the middle of a crowded business district in the center of the capital.

He said that by such acts, these parties seek to effect Yemen's ties with fraternal Arab countries, led by Egypt. The source hinted that "separatist elements" in Yemen are behind the incident, noting that it coincided with Yemen's celebration of the second anniversary of its victory over the breakaway attempt.

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Iraq: Official—Iraq-UN Deal To Be Implemented Within 'Few Days'

JN1207122696 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0810 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 12 Jul (INA)—'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, secretary general of the National Progressive and Patriotic Front [NPPF], has stated that Iraq's continuous economic progress in confronting the embargo is the result of President Saddam Husayn's historic message to the Council of Ministers on 2 December 1995.

Chairing an NPPF meeting, 'Abd-al-Ghafur said that the Memorandum of Understanding, which Iraq signed with the United Nations, is proceeding well and will be implemented during the next few days, noting the failure of the frustrated U.S. attempts to hinder this implementation because these attempts contravene the text of the memorandum and are considered to be a flagrant interference in the affairs of the UN General Secretariat and the powers of the UN secretary general.

'Abd-al-Ghafur alluded to the meeting of the Arab rulers in Cairo and said that excluding Iraq and the meeting outcome that pertains to Iraq was the result of U.S. dictates and the devious practices of the agent regimes and the distribution of dirty, illegal money. He stressed that the masses and their militant forces expressed the Arab nation's genuine stand when they expressed their support for President Saddam Husayn and rejected the Cairo summit behavior.

The NPPF secretary general touched on the celebration by Iraq and the Arab nation of the anniversary of the glorious revolution which brought advancement to Iraq in various fields and placed it on the path of becoming a paragon for Arabism and humanity under the leadership of president Saddam Husayn.

The meeting, which was attended by the members of the NPPF secretariat, discussed preparations by the NPPF member parties and masses to celebrate the glorious revolution anniversary and achievements, such as the birth of the NPPF.

Iraq: Officers, al-Nada Family Arrested After 'Coup Attempt'

MM1207131496 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 12 Jul 96 pp 1,6

[Unattributed report: "Coup Attempt Foiled in Iraq; Former Air Force Commander Questioned"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-HAYAH — Arab sources told AL-HAYAH yesterday that reports of the arrest of a group of officers in Iraq last month were true, and that some 50 middle and junior rank officers were "involved in a coup attempt." However, the same sources explained that, so far, there is no further information about these officers' affiliations, although some opposition organizations abroad have tried to take credit for the attempt. The sources said that a division commander, Brigadier General Suhayl al-A'zami, and Colonel 'Adnan 'Ali al-Ta'i, commanding a 4th Corps armored division stationed in al-'Amarah, are among the detainees.

The sources revealed that the most serious development after the arrest of the mostly Sunni officers was that the security authorities took Staff General Pilot Humayd Sha'ban, former Iraqi Air Force Commander, from Tikrit, for questioning, after the detained officers said that they had planned to make him head of state in the event that they were able to topple the regime. The same sources said, however, that Sha'ban was later released after being able to prove that the junior officers had not contacted him. His remarks were confirmed by the detained officers who explained that they planned to make Sha'ban president for a limited period of time in order to provide them with a front, and confirmed that they had not contacted him at all.

The sources said that many questions are being asked in Baghdad about the identity of these officers and the reason why they would have made Humayd Sha'ban their head of state had their plan succeeded. They stressed that the discovery of the attempt came during the stage of planning, rather than implementation.

It is worth mentioning that Gen. Sha'ban is an elderly and religious man with an excellent record during the Iraq-Iran war, especially with regard to improving the Iraqi Air Force during the war by training more pilots and acquiring modern aircraft. Sha'ban became Air Force commander soon after the start of the Iraq-Iran war in 1980, succeeding another officer, Muhammad Jasim al-Juburi, and was succeeded at the end of the war by one of Saddam Husayn's relatives, General Muzahim Sa'b Hasan al-Tikriti.

Other sources said that the officers' arrests came at a time when several members of the al-Nada family, loyal to the late President Muhammad Hasan al-Bakr, were arrested. The sources wondered whether the arrests of the al-Nada family members had anything to do with the recent coup attempt or whether it was just accounts being settled between members of the ruling family after President Saddam Husayn's sons 'Udayy and Qusayy gained preeminence. The sources explained that despite the fact that Qusayy is now the strong man, after the Iraqi president of course, 'Udayy still has some influence, since he was not taken to task after he shot and wounded his uncle Watban Ibrahim

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al-Tikriti, Saddam Husayn's half-brother, in the leg, which apparently had to be amputated. So far, 'Udayy has managed to oust Watban from the Interior Ministry and his brother Sab'awi from the Public Security Directorate. It seems that his next target is Barzan al-Tikriti, Iraq's representative to the United Nations in Geneva. 'Udayy promised to "take care of him" after Barzan said that 'Udayy is not qualified to hold major posts and that he is not his father's legitimate successor to the presidency.

It is worth mentioning that the three brothers are no less evil than the other branches of the family, and, despite Barzan's attempt at projecting a kind and moderate image in Geneva, they played important parts at some point in eliminating those opposed to the regime.

Iraqi sources in Amman, contacted from London, said that one of the reasons why the al-Nada family members were arrested is because this family is one of two Tikriti families (the other is al-Sumayt) which refused to participate directly in eliminating Saddam Husayn's son-in-law Husayn Kamil Hasan al-Majid on his return to Iraq from Jordan last February.

It should be mentioned that President al-Bakr's wife was from the al-Nada family, and that one of her daughters has been married to 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, Saddam Husayn's cousin on his father's side, since 'Ali Hasan's days as a noncommissioned army officer. Another daughter is married to Mundhir al-Mutlaq, the present Iraqi ambassador to Tunisia, and a third daughter was married to [former] Iraqi defense minister 'Adnan Khayrallah Talfah, Saddam Husayn's cousin on his mother's side who was killed in 1989 in a helicopter crash that 'Ali Hasan al-Majid and Husayn Kamil were believed to have planned in order to make room for themselves in Saddam Husayn's inner circle.

Iraq: Opposition Radio Claims 150 Officers Arrested

NC1407151096 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Saddam Husayn's military intelligence agency recently arrested approximately 150 officers from the Republican Guards and the 6th and 14th Divisions. Iraqi opposition sources said yesterday that investigations of these detainees on charges of selling weapons and military equipment to civilians are continuing. These sources also said that the ranks of the arrested officers range from lieutenant colonel, colonel, and brigadier general. They noted that bribery and buying equipment and documents are rife within army circles. Corruption among senior officers linked to the regime involves selling military documents at exorbitant prices.

Iraq: Opposition Radio Says 130 Officers Arrested on Coup Charges

JN1407151896 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1220 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Informed sources confirmed that as of 12 July 130 officers were arrested for taking part in the aborted coup attempt two weeks ago. The sources told our radio that a number of staff officers of the Republican Guard command were among those arrested. The sources said they expect the arrest and interrogation campaign will include a group of military officers who were pensioned off after the defection of some of their colleagues.

The Iraqi opposition sources said Hamid Sha'ban, former air force commander, was detained for three days in the headquarters of the Special Security Command. He was interrogated by a committee chaired by criminal Qusayy. The committee members included Mani' 'Abd-al-Rashid; Major General Mu'tamad Ni'mat al-Tikriti, intelligence director; and Taha 'Abbas al-Ahbabi, Public Security director.

Hamid Sha'ban was summoned to Baghdad after his name was mentioned in the confessions of one of the detainees, who claimed that the coup leaders were planning to install Hamid Sha'ban as president of the republic.

Iraq: PUK Radio Cites TIMES—Officers Tried To Poison Saddam

NC1407172996 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The British paper THE TIMES has reported that dozens of Iraqi officers were recently executed after the failure of a coup attempt to topple the head of the Iraqi regime.

The paper said that the attempt to assassinate dictator Saddam Husayn involved lacing his food with poison, a technique favored by the Baghdad regime's security services to eliminate its opponents.

THE TIMES added that about 50 Iraqi officers were arrested last month on the charge of preparing a military attack to topple the dictator. It noted that most of these officers were from Tikrit, Saddam Husayn's birthplace.

The British paper asserted that Qusayy, Saddam Husayn's younger son, is personally conducting the investigations and the execution of these officers.

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Iraq: PUK Radio Comments on Execution of Army Officers

NC1407181796 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Jul 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners. Saddam Husayn is continuing to physically liquidate Iraqi officers. This technique remains the dictator's way of eliminating his opponents inside the army.

According to reports carried by the world press and radios, the dictatorial regime arrested 50 Iraqi officers last month on the charge of preparing a military attack to topple Saddam Husayn. This was reported by Radio France Inter, which cited Iraqi opposition sources. The British paper THE TIMES also confirmed in its issue of Saturday [13 July] that dozens of Iraqi Army officers were executed after being accused by Saddam Husayn of attempting to stage a coup against him. The paper also said that 'Udayy Saddam Husayn personally conducted the investigations and the execution of these officers.

Thus Saddam Husayn has delegated the task of liquidating his opponents from inside and outside the family to his son 'Udayy, who had already carried out a number of criminal acts against the Iraqi people in addition to this task.

Whether or not these officers had indeed tried to topple Saddam Husayn, their physical liquidation as well as the liquidation of other officers from time to time is clear evidence that the Iraqi Army has become the focal point for opposition to Saddam Husayn's policies. It is evidence of Husayn's failed attempts to erect an iron wall between the Army and the people. Saddam is trying to isolate the Army from the people and keep it at arms length from the stage of events because the Army has started to realize that getting rid of the dictatorship is the only solution for restoring security, political stability, and economic strength to Iraq. Therefore, Saddam Husayn regards the Iraqi Army as a real danger to his regime's future. He is constantly trying to subdue it and reduce its role by backing and strengthening the spying and intelligence services that are constantly monitoring the movements of military units and by liquidating the officers and field commanders whose loyalty to Saddam is suspected.

Saddam Husayn's continued liquidation of the Iraqi Army officers means that there is a growing opposition to this dictator inside the Army. This opposition is bound to grow daily until the day comes when the Army and the people unite to topple the dictatorship and restore Iraq to the international community.

Iraq: PUK Radio Reports 'Tens' of Iraqi Officers Executed

LD1407100296 Tehran IRNA in English 0644 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mahabad, W. Azarbaijan Prov., July 14, IRNA — Tens of Iraqi army officers, accused of plotting against the Iraqi regime, were recently executed by order of Saddam Husayn, said a radio affiliated to the Iraq's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) on Sunday [14 July].

The PUK radio, monitored here, added that so far altogether 120 army personnel have been arrested on charge of attempting to overthrow the Iraqi regime. The radio did not give any detail on when the army personnel made their attempt.

Iraq: 'Responsible Source' Denies Attempt on Saddam, Arrests

JN1507101396 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 15 Jul 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible Iraqi source denied allegations by the Iraqi opposition in Jordan about the arrest of Lieutenant General Pilot Hamid Sha'ban, former commander of the Iraqi Air Force and current adviser to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn.

The source said Lt. Gen. Sha'ban is still an active adviser to the president and that he is one of the Iraqis most loyal to the homeland and far removed from political careerism.

The source ridiculed reports propagated by the opposition about an assassination attempt against the Iraqi president and the arrest of a large number of President Saddam's bodyguards. The source said these reports are fabrications and fireworks launched by the Iraqi opposition and its supporters in Jordan.

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Israel: Netanyahu Vows To Continue Peace Process

TA1207171696 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by correspondent Shlomo Ganor in Washington; date not given — recorded, in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles; processed from the Hebrew]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ganor] Good evening, Mr. Prime Minister.

[Netanyahu] Good evening.

[Ganor] Toward the end of your U.S. visit, how would you sum up your intensive talks with the administration?

[Netanyahu] I think it was a very successful visit with the administration — of course, first and foremost with the President — and a very warm and friendly meeting with Congress and the Jewish community, as well as the entire American public. It strengthened and affirmed the already excellent relations between Israel and the United States and between the new Israeli Government and the U.S. Administration and the entire American people.

[Ganor] There is the impression that the political process is drawing to a halt. Can you confirm that or will it continue?

[Netanyahu] It is a mistaken impression. We plan to continue the process. I have no intention of freezing it. I discussed with President Clinton practical steps to advance the process in the various sectors in order to achieve something positive.

I would like to say something to our Arab listeners in Israel as well as outside Israel: Those outside Israel, you have no reason to fear the new government. This is a government that intends to bring peace. It was elected to bring peace. It was also elected for a new policy of economic openness that will benefit you: the Palestinians, the Jordanians, the Syrians, all the peoples of the region. We plan to move forward with openness and in cooperation with you.

[Ganor] Despite the threats being heard from the Arab capitals, especially from Syria and from Iran?

[Netanyahu] The rhetoric does not serve anything. It does not lead to anything positive, and I must tell you that it also does not influence us. I also hear other things behind the surface in various contacts we have with Arab states, and I believe that many people in the Arab world understand that this government plans to continue the political process in a responsible and cautious manner, but definitely not to freeze anything, to progress, perhaps in a different way, but to progress.

[Ganor] So the threats do not upset you?

[Netanyahu] I think they are superfluous. I am not pleased with them, I do not like it, I think it is not good, but I believe that what is important is to know what we want to do. We definitely want to enter into productive, genuine, serious, and responsible negotiations with all our neighbors, as well as with Arab states that do not neighbor us. There are contacts with quite a few such countries, which I plan to expand and strengthen.

[Ganor] You chose Egypt as the first Arab state to visit. What do you plan to present to President Mubarak next Thursday [18 July]?

[Netanyahu] First, it is an opportunity to strengthen the initial and still most important peace between Israel and the Arab world. All sorts of things were said in Egypt before the elections, during the previous government, and after the elections, which were not always pleasant to Israeli ears. I want to bring Israeli- Egyptian ties back on the right track. I view ties with Egypt as very important, and I think that Egypt can fulfill a very positive role in the Arab world in general and in our ties with Arab states. I will discuss that with President Mubarak.

[Ganor] I will not ask you if you will meet with Palestinian Authority [PA] leader Yasir 'Arafat.

[Netanyahu] I have already heard a report that there is going to be a summit meeting. I am apparently going to several summits on the same day. There is no basis for those reports. I will meet with 'Arafat when I decide it is vital. We are, of course, currently already holding contacts with the PA. I plan to expand the contacts unofficially, as well as officially, and they will include government representatives who will meet with PA representatives.

[Ganor] Mr. Prime Minister, the Palestinians watching us tonight expect to hear from you, Binyamin Netanyahu, what you have to say to them about the closure, the expansion of settlements, their economic and political future.

[Netanyahu] First of all, I can say that it is my aim to ease the conditions for the Palestinian public, both from humane and peace points of view. I do not see peace as some closure or sealed fortress in which we do not allow the Palestinians to enter our towns to work. There are those who aspire to that, but I do not. I aspire to a policy of openness, which in the long run is much more important. The proximity of the populations does not permit that surgical approach that people discuss. That is why my policy is one of economic openness, but at the same time, we know that the closure was imposed due to security problems, because the PA did not honor its commitments to

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act against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad terrorism inside its territory. Therefore, if there is determined and responsible activity by the PA to prevent terrorism against us, I will definitely be generous in mitigating the closure in order to ease the situation for the Palestinians in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza.

[Ganor] Have you already made a decision on Hebron?

[Netanyahu] I discussed it with President Clinton at length. I presented various ideas, but I said that I want to formulate a decision within the framework of the cabinet, one which balances two needs and two aims: One is to honor agreements. We demand that the PA honor all its commitments on defense and other issues, and first and foremost its commitments on Jerusalem, where there are violations. The Israeli side cannot be called upon to honor its commitments without the Palestinian side doing the same. On Hebron specifically, I will discuss it once again in the cabinet in relation to the second need, which is security. Hebron is different from all other cities. It is a mixed town, where its Jewish population was decimated in 1929, and there was the grave attack in the Cave of the Patriarchs by Goldstein. This situation gives us supreme responsibility. What we must do in Hebron is to provide security for the Jewish and Arab populations, maintain the oldest Jewish community in the world by creating conditions which provide security. I do not say that lightly. I have been on the job for only two weeks. I have devoted a lot of time to that issue. I also discussed it with President Clinton. I will discuss it with my colleagues and make a decision, which I believe will be the right decision, which will be tied to honoring agreements by the Palestinian side.

Israel: Netanyahu on Clinton, Peace, Secret File

TA1207193896 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by correspondent Ya'aqov Ahime'ir in New York on 12 July — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ahime'ir] During your visit to the United States, there have been very sharp reactions from the Arab world to your policy. The Syrians call you Hitler; the Palestinians use their own terminology to express their anger. Do we now have a different Middle East?

[Netanyahu] The Arab world is getting used to a new government, one which reflects the desires of the Israeli public. The Arab world does not have anything to fear from the new government. It has all the reasons to work with us to reach peace and economic cooperation and a framework of relations that assures security to all the peoples of the region. This government intends to advance the political process and does not intend to freeze it. It plans to hold negotiations with the Syrians, the Palestinian Authority [PA], and Lebanon, and to develop relations with other Arab states with which contacts are being formed these very days. Simultaneously with the sharp rhetoric we have been hearing we are also hearing other tunes.

[Ahime'ir] You do not say when you will be meeting with Yasir 'Arafat; you merely say that it will happen when security conditions are ripe. But THE NEW YORK TIMES today quoted Edward Abington, the U.S. consul general in Jerusalem, as saying that lack of such contacts only increases concern among the Palestinians.

[Netanyahu] I believe there will not be any problem of communication between the Israeli Government and the PA, or between 'Arafat and myself. The communication will exist. I do not say there will not be differences of opinion, but I will try to set up communication through all means and along all tracks to expand the basis for understanding and not the basis for misunderstanding. There will not be any misunderstanding; there might be lack of agreement. I will aspire to reduce the areas of lack of agreement and to expand agreement between us and the PA.

[Ahime'ir] Can we understand from that that if the PA does not release Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] detainees you will ease the closure?

[Netanyahu] The closure is a security problem. If there is security and they take firm action to maintain security we will definitely ease the closure in order to give them a better life and ease the plight existing in Gaza and the PA territories in Judaea and Samaria. In my view, the release of prisoners is not a move in the right direction. I am prepared to ease the closure, and I insist that simultaneously they preserve security.

[Ahime'ir] Mr. Prime Minister, do you plan to close Orient House or at least to halt the PA's political activity there?

[Netanyahu] We will act to make sure that those undertakings are implemented, and I hope that the first thing that happens is that the PA will save us the need to take actions or to use pressure. It should open a new era. We did not like the Oslo A and B agreements, but they exist, and we are prepared to honor every clause. However, the Palestinians must do the same. That will help us to get to the more difficult and more complex issue, the negotiations on the permanent settlement.

[Ahime'ir] Did you find that the previous government made far-reaching concessions to the Palestinians,

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which Dr. Dore Gold called dangerous in an interview today? What are those concessions?

[Netanyahu] This government operates on the basis of honoring official and legal commitments given to the sides. I cannot say that there are legal or official commitments given to the sides — Syria and the Palestinians — which we did not know about and which we are committed to implement. In other words, there is nothing additional binding us beyond the Oslo A and B agreements. I did not find any secret annexes. The same is true about Syria. There are no official, legal, and binding commitments which Israel has undertaken and which I did not know about.

[Ahime'ir] Your meeting with President Clinton was the first since you became prime minister although you have met him before. Can you tell us when the ice between you melted?

[Netanyahu] There is constant talk about ice, but we held a very friendly meeting, we did not enter the freeze or deadlock I read about in the Israeli press. The relations were very open and friendly. President Clinton is very intelligent and informed about what is happening.

[Ahime'ir] You said that he cracked jokes.

[Netanyahu] There were some good jokes.

[Ahime'ir] Can you tell us?

[Netanyahu] I cannot because it is a state secret.

[Ahime'ir] Do you believe that the existing differences between you and President Clinton in certain fields, such as settlements, will be removed?

[Netanyahu] I will tell you where agreement exists because it is important to know since once you know where there is agreement, you can understand a great deal about what has happened and what can still take place. The United States understands that there is a natural process of development of the Jewish settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. I showed President Clinton and Congress the table demonstrating the expansion, the growth of the Jewish population in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza by 50 percent under the Labor government, not the Likud government. It is the outcome of natural growth. People get married, they have children, etc. I believe that is accepted. In other words, the natural growth within the framework of the municipal boundaries of the existing settlements is not something that appears to be in dispute. The other thing on which there is agreement is the bypass roads, which were agreed upon in the Oslo process, which is something I welcome since they reduce the friction between the Jewish and Palestinian populations. The question you are asking refers to new settlements, which we will have to discuss in the cabinet and decide how and when to do it. We have not yet decided. The areas of agreement up to now have in fact permitted a 50 percent natural growth of the Jewish population in Judaea and Samaria, which is not unimportant.

[Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 12 July also carries an interview with Netanyahu, by 'Imanu'el Rosen, recorded in New York today. When Rosen tells Netanyahu he is showing "perhaps exaggerated self-confidence for a new prime minister," Netanyahu replies: "I have trust in the future of the State of Israel. First of all, I believe in our inner abilities, our ability to overcome difficulties, our ability to achieve peace with our neighbors when they understand that we want real peace and not an artificial peace, and I have confidence in our relations with the United States. I believe that the most profound thing that transpired during my visit is the display of the depth of sympathy toward the State of Israel under various U.S. Administrations, and I must add, the strength of the affinity for the current government in Israel. I believe that confidence is justified."

[Asked about the appearance of John J. Sullivan in his U.S. Social Security file, Netanyahu says that he has asked the authorities to open his classified files. Netanyahu says the journalists who investigated the issue knew there "was nothing in it, that somebody mistakenly used my credit card number — it happens in the thousands — and one of the persons who had my number was Juliana Sullivan. I assume that people did not think that I went around with a wig as Juliana Sullivan."]

Israel: Netanyahu Returns, Holds News Conference

TA1407184596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 14 Jul 96

[News conference with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu at Ben-Gurion Airport upon his return from the United States — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Netanyahu] Good day to you. We are returning from my first visit to the United States as prime minister. I had very good talks there with the U.S. President, the leadership of the U.S. Administration, the leadership of the U.S. Congress and Congress in general, the U.S. business and economic leadership, Jewish community leaders, and the most senior members of the U.S. media. In all those meetings, I presented the political and economic concepts of the new Israeli Government. I must say that they were received with a great deal of understanding, and I believe that the beginning of a very good relationship

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has been achieved between the Clinton administration and the new Israeli Government.

I intend to convene the government on 16 July and give it a detailed report on the visit. The main political significance of this visit is the achievement, to a large extent, of an understanding or, rather, a clear awareness on the part of the U.S. Administration of the new positions of the new government. We clarified our positions regarding the importance of fulfilling agreements in order to promote the peace process, the importance we attribute to security as a basic foundation of peace, and the crucial importance we attach to the unity of Jerusalem. We discussed several issues related to Lebanon and Syria, of course, as well as increased cooperation on the counterterrorism issue.

We agreed on several things that are slated to guide our joint activity. First, on the security level, we reached a decision to develop and implement an early warning system in Israel against ballistic missiles. Second, we set a definite date for the joint Israeli-U.S. development of the Nautilus missile, which is a laser system for the interception of katyushas. Third, we decided on convening the joint counterterrorism group at the end of the month. Fourth, we also set up a joint team of the U.S. Pentagon and the Israeli defense establishment to handle the search for the MIA's. Fifth, we decided to establish cooperation or, rather, we reached agreement on the issue of the monitoring group in Lebanon on the basis of the understanding between us and the Americans on its modus operandi. I must add that on the eve of my departure for Israel, I also held a lengthy talk with Butrus Butrus-Ghali on Ron Arad and the other MIA's. This subject arose in all our talks, on all levels, everywhere.

During this visit I also placed great emphasis on the economic issue and on Israel's economic relations with the world in general and the United States in particular. As said, I met with the U.S. economic leadership in Washington and held a unique — I believe the first ever — meeting with the U.S. business leadership on Wall Street in New York. In those meetings, the Americans generally showed great interest in the privatization issue and deep appreciation for the Israeli Government's rather difficult decision to cut its budget. I must say that I found great interest on Wall Street in the privatization issue and in our plans for the Israeli economy. I am referring to the heads of the world's largest companies, who showed a great deal of interest and intend to come here to examine practical possibilities. As for concrete agreements, in the meeting with Secretary of the Treasury Bob Rubin and with Joe Stiglitz, chairman of the council of economic advisers, we agreed to set up a joint advisory team to accelerate the privatization processes in Israel in order to rehabilitate the Israeli capital market. I was also asked by President Clinton and other administration officials for my position on the regional bank issue, and I said that, after considering the matter, Israel has reason to support the establishment of this bank as a means to achieve the economic development of the regional countries. I was asked about this in Congress as well and was pleased to find that in the wake of our response, Congress decided to approve in principle the establishment of a regional bank. In addition, I spoke with World Bank President Jim Wolfensohn, and we concluded that he would submit a detailed plan on specific projects to develop the economy in the areas under the Palestinian Authority's [PA] control. I said that our approach would be positive and practical, and we will get the detailed proposal in the weeks ahead.

I would sum up my visit as very successful. Beyond the concrete achievements, there was also a feeling in the air that Israel enjoys very deep and widespread support both inside and outside Washington and from the administration, Congress, the Jewish community, and the American public as a whole. Whoever was there and walked the streets — and I was not granted that privilege too often — could not fail to be impressed by the warmth toward Israel in general and, to be quite frank, toward the new Israeli government as well. That will definitely help us to implement our plans and intentions to develop the peace process and Israel's economy while strengthening ties with the United States.

[Israel Television Channel 1's Dan Scemama] I would like to ask two questions. The first relates to the economy and the second pertains to the political process. I will start with the political question: You were roundly applauded by Congress following, among other things, your remarks on security with peace and democracy in the Arab states. Yet that applause should perhaps be weighed against the tremendous fury in the Arab world. Will you be capable of placating Egyptian President Husni Mubarak when you visit him on 18 July? And, with your permission, a question in the economic sphere: You probably know that the shares on the Israeli stock market have been plummeting. People are pulling out their investments. Perhaps this indicates a lack of confidence in the government's economic policy?

[Netanyahu] First of all, with regard to the Arab reaction, I must say that my remarks in Washington reflected my policy statements in Israel and in the Knesset both before and after the elections. I neither adapted nor changed my positions. These positions were well known. The question, therefore, is what elicited this orchestrated response to our declarations in Washington. The only answer I can come up with is that it appears

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as though someone who hoped not so much that I would make different statements in the United States but rather that my remarks would draw a different reaction there was disappointed. Perhaps they had hoped that my arm would be twisted or something like that. I can probably assume that this disappointment was shared by several elements in Israel. I must tell you, however, that the United States understands that a new government has been elected in Israel. This government has its own policy on how to achieve a secure peace. The Americans also understand that the responsibility for determining policy and handling the negotiations is Israel's alone. As you already saw, there is a great deal of support for many of our positions, with regard to Jerusalem for example. The Arab reaction was only to be expected. I will tell you something else: We received all kinds of reactions and held various contacts which are totally different from all this orchestrated rhetoric. We are making progress on the processes. One example would be the 12 July meeting on the convening of the monitoring committee on Lebanon. There is rhetoric, and then there is reality. I would propose that the Arab leaders drop the rhetoric and get down to earth. There is a new government in Israel that is prepared to make progress toward peace together with them, and I suggest that we concentrate on the issues at hand and less on talk.

As for the economic issue, I think that my approach is geared more toward long-term rather than just immediate results. Things should always be taken in perspective. Wall Street was highly impressed with our responsible handling of the budget and the privatization plan, as well as with our determination to achieve economic independence. I think that people there were impressed more by that than by daily developments. I propose that people in Israel also take the long-range view. Rather than judging things in terms of days or weeks, they should examine processes in the context of months and years. We definitely plan to change the face of the Israeli economy. We intend to put it on the path toward recovery and prosperity. I am convinced that the money market will reflect this economic recovery and growth in time.

[Qol Yisra'el's Gil Litman] Mr. Prime Minister, we heard you negate the statements made by Dore Gold, your political adviser, to Qol Yisra'el about his having discovered secret agreements and various terrible things while perusing the documents and agreements left by the previous government. I would like to ask you whether it is true that you conducted an inquiry into this matter with Cabinet Secretary Dani Nave and with Gold? With your permission, I would also like to ask you another question. Today, Qol Yisra'el reported a comprehensive plan by the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip to flesh out the existing settlements and to build new ones. They plan to present you with their plan in the near future. Can you expressly tell us your policy with regard to the establishment of new settlements and the fleshing out of existing ones?

[Netanyahu] First of all, this talk about a reprimand and inquiries is completely baseless. The truth is very simple. Dore Gold did not mention any new agreements or documents. He said that we were surprised by several things pertaining to the previous government's turning a blind eye to Palestinian violations and so forth. However, I reiterate — and Dore Gold never said this — that we did not discover any new documents or binding agreements after we established the government. It goes without saying that there were no reprimands. I have the greatest appreciation for Dore Gold and for Cabinet Secretary Dani Nave. They enjoy my full backing. They are doing and will continue to do an excellent job.

As for the settlements, I think that two things were clarified in Washington. First of all, the parameters of agreement: In Washington, they understand that there is a natural process of settlement expansion as a result of natural growth. People get married and have children. There is no argument about this. Second, everyone agrees that we must complete the bypass roads. This was agreed upon as part of the Oslo accords, and there is no argument here. True, we have differences with regard to the principle we support that all Jews have the right to live in all parts of Eretz Yisra'el. This controversy did not come up for discussion, however, for the very simple reason that we have not yet made any practical decisions — as opposed to those in principle — on this issue.

[Litman] New settlements as well, Mr. Prime Minister?

[Netanyahu] I said that we have not made decisions on these issues yet. If I am presented with one proposal or another, I will certainly consider it, but please remember that the government's policy is determined by the government and not by any external body.

[Israel Television Channel 2's Tziyon Nanus] Mr. Prime Minister, permit me to return to the economic issue. Since the government approved the budget cuts, the stock exchanged has dropped 6.5 percent. Do you perhaps intend to approach Bank of Israel Governor Frenkel on this issue in order that he lower the interest rates?

[Netanyahu] First, I believe in the governor's independence and do not believe we will achieve any objective by harming it. The balance struck between the government's and the governor's policy yields the best result. I

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believe. I must tell you something about the behavior of the stock exchange and its reaction to the budget. My responsibility as prime minister — I do not represent any sector: neither the employers, nor the Histadrut, nor any other group — is to bring about the basic recovery of the Israeli economy, which is not in good condition at the moment as a result of irresponsible actions. Therefore, the proposed budget is vital for the recovery of the economy as well as that of the stock exchange. If the economy is healthy, the stock exchange will be too; this is clear as day. If we do not put things right, those who will suffer more than they are suffering today are the weak social strata. Everybody will suffer, but they will suffer more than anybody else. Therefore, this supreme responsibility leads me to adopt the necessary policy. I know where I want us to get to, and I am certain we will get there. The stock exchange will understand this sooner or later, but it will understand in the end.

[IDF Radio's Baraq Odem] You leave for Egypt this week to meet with President Mubarak. Are you pleased with President Mubarak's attitude toward Israel since your election? Does he refuse to come to Israel despite the government's invitations?

[Netanyahu] He will receive an invitation from me, and we will be able to examine this at that time. I think the importance of the relationship with Egypt is clear. After all, the basic foundation of peace between Israel and the Arab countries is primarily the Israeli-Egyptian peace, and we want to expand and enhance it — first through bilateral relations but, naturally, also through our continued peace contacts with the Palestinians; the Syrians — let me emphasize this: the Syrians; the Lebanese; and the other Arab countries with which we have maintained contacts since and even before the elections. I think Egypt plays an important role. We hope that past problems — there were certain problems, as is well known — were a passing phenomenon and that relations will be solid and strong. This is my aspiration, and as I hear from messages relayed by Egypt, this is also the Egyptian aspiration. I believe this is a good basis for the meeting on 18 July.

Israel: Labor Dismisses Netanyahu's U.S. Visit 'Achievements'

TA1507055396 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0400 GMT 15 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Labor officials say that the only thing Netanyahu achieved in his U.S. visit was to create a united Arab front against Israel and harm existing relations with the Gulf states, and that if he attained any achievements at all, then those belong first and foremost to Shim'on Peres. Our correspondent Baraq Ronen reports:

[Ronen] [passage omitted] At a news conference held last night upon his return from the United States, Netanyahu spoke about a meeting of the international antiterror group to be held later this month, the establishment of a group to deal with the question of Israel's POW's and MIA's, and a meeting of the committee monitoring the situation in south Lebanon. As far as Labor is concerned, Prime Minister Netanyahu took too much credit on all these issues, far too much credit. All these agreements, Labor's spokesman said, are the fruit of the work of Shim'on Peres, the former prime minister and defense minister.

A communique issued by Labor went even further, expressing satisfaction with the fact that despite the politically unsuccessful visit, the prime minister failed to spoil the understandings and accords attained by Peres, thus averting serious harm to Israel's security. According to Labor, this is Netanyahu's sole achievement.

Israel: Government's Lebanon Plan Said Including Unilateral Pullout

TA1207165996 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 12 Jul 96 p B5

[Article by Tzvi Bar'el: "Unit 504 Is Preparing Lebanon"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] SLA [South Lebanese Army] Commander Antoine Lahd had his bags all packed. During the preelection period in Israel, the elderly, ailing commander was often depressed. He saw that the Peres government was trying to promote the peace process with Syria and realized that his army, its officers, and he himself would soon pay a high personal price. More SLA soldiers were defecting daily to the Lebanese Army and, worse, to Hizballah. Acting with Israel's encouragement, SLA commanders recently visited foreign consulates in Israel and purchased tickets to fly overseas. No backup plan for the SLA seemed to be in the offing.

According to Lebanese sources, Lahd was on his way to join his relatives in Paris. What held him back was the flicker of hope that the Likud would win. He did not hide his unhappiness from Shim'on Peres, openly voicing his grievances. As soon as the election results were announced, Lahd was visited by high-ranking Israeli officers who promised that Israel's attitude toward his troops would change. This week he visited his friend, Defense Minister Yitzhaq Mordekhay, in his office, to hear about the imminent change in his standing.

A week ago, the Arab weekly AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI reported a more important meeting held shortly after the elections, attended by Gen. Lahd,

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Abu-Arz [Etian Saqr] — leader of the Guardians of the Cedars of Lebanon — and Uri Lubrani, coordinator of the government activities in Lebanon. The Arab weekly learned that Lubrani had promised Abu-Arz that he would soon "proudly return to Beirut where they would reverse the death sentence he had been given." The weekly further stated that Lubrani informed the two Lebanese commanders of Israel's new action plan. The plan includes collaboration on all levels with the Israeli Government's past friends, from Samir Ja'ja's Lebanese troops, through agents formerly deployed in Beirut, and down to salary raises for SLA soldiers, more weapons, and the activation of special troops.

According to the weekly, these special troops consist of Lebanon Unit 504, whose recruits are supposed to collect intelligence data on Hizballah activities, as well as carry out terrorist attacks in Beirut and other Lebanese cities to show the Lebanese public that their government and its sponsor Syria are incapable of maintaining public security. The weekly adds that approximately at the same time Lubrani met with the SLA commander, a senior Mosad representative met with a member of the Christian Phalanges in Cyprus to plan a series of operations designed to ensure the revival of the Christian community and to resume the activities of its troops in the military, but especially the political sphere.

Senior SLA commanders who are already overseas — some in France and others in Australia and Canada — were requested to return to Lebanon so as to take command of the troops. Unit 504 members, who had purchased apartments in Israel, were asked to pack and return to the security zone. One of these was Ahmad al-Halaq, who had been suspected in the murder of Fu'ad Maghniyah, the brother of 'Imad Maghniyah, the man in charge of Hizballah's terrorist operations. The report further stated that Israel also began recruiting new members for the unit, men who are new faces in the field. Furthermore, it has been collecting information on the Phalangists who had been trained in Israel in order to reactivate them in Lebanon.

Lebanon estimates that the Netanyahu government is seeking to embrace a new policy regarding Lebanon. According to a Western diplomatic source, the Israeli Government believes that the security zone is a Syrian card more than it is an Israeli one. It is a front Syria has been warming up and cooling down at will, preventing Israel, captive in its security zone concept, from initiating moves of its own. The source believes that the new government launched its new political campaign with a frontal attack on Syria which was again defined as a terrorist state, and with a clandestine move designed to disband the Syrian-Lebanese alliance. The line that will apparently guide the Israeli Government consists of divesting Syria of that card by undertaking unilateral withdrawal. Such a move would allow the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] to bomb or shell as it sees fit without consideration for any red lines set down in the agreement of understandings achieved after Operation Grapes of Wrath. Such unilateral withdrawal will also serve to embarrass Syria, which will be hard-put to explain its continued presence in Lebanon after Israeli departure.

Yet this Israeli course of action is not devoid of involvement in Lebanese politics. A Lebanese element believes that before pulling out, Israel will seek to ensure that it is leaving an amicable government behind in Lebanon.

Paris is another arena of Lebanon-related action. Four Christian opposition leaders live in the French capital: Gen. Michel 'Awn, Amin al-Jumayyil, Raymond Iddih, and Dory Sham'un. There are usually profound disagreements between these four men, who until last month were unable to present a joint political line so as to rally the entire Lebanese opposition around it. They are all opposed to Syria and the Syrian troops' presence in Lebanon, all would like to return to power in Lebanon, and are all divided on the ways to achieve these two objectives. Last month three of the four leaders — with the exception of Raymond Iddih — met in Rome and decided that it was time to collaborate. Lebanese elements in France reported that prior to that encounter, some of these leaders met with Israeli representatives, including the Israeli ambassador to France. Israeli sources have categorically denied the very existence of these encounters. [passage omitted]

Israel: Gold Delivers Netanyahu Message to Syrian Ambassador

TA1307075396 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0700 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal in the United States — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Segal] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu wraps up his U.S. visit today with a first political achievement, this one with Syria. Dr. Dore Gold, the prime minister's political adviser, held a tete-a-tete meeting last night with Walid al-Mu'allim, Syria's ambassador to Washington, and relayed to him a message from Netanyahu to the effect that Israel is interested in continuing the negotiations with Damascus. Here is what Professor Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States, told us:

[Rabinovich] The very ability to reach an agreement, the positive message embodied in this agreement, the

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human and political contact, definitely are positive signals about the ability to enter such negotiations regardless of anything else.

[Segal] The short meeting took place at the State Department prior to a meeting held by the ambassadors of Syria, Lebanon, France, Israel, and U.S. officials in which it was decided to set up the monitoring committee on south Lebanon — the first achievement Netanyahu will present to the Arab world as proof that he wants to advance the peace process. [passage omitted]

[Rabinovich] This is indeed a first accord between Syria and the Netanyahu government, and it stems from the fact that Syrian interests are vested in this. It explains the rather surprising development in light of the verbal tension, which has recently existed between Israel and Syria.

[Segal] Netanyahu has proved that words and deeds are two different matters. Despite the fact that the Syrians likened him to a Nazi and his firm pronouncements about Syria's use of Hizballah terror, his visit to the United States ended with this surprising meeting between Dr. Dore Gold and Walid al-Mu'allim. It was just a first exploratory meeting, but even this handshake by officials is significant, if only symbolically so, in that it contributes to the message Netanyahu is seeking to convey: I am forging ahead in a different way. [passage omitted]

Israel: Cabinet Secretary Comments on Syrian, Palestinian Tracks

TA1407064496 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0400 GMT 14 Jul 96

[Report by special correspondent Udi Segal in the United States]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. peace coordinator Dennis Ross will soon come to the Middle East in an attempt to promote the peace process according to the new formulas Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu presented to the U.S. Administration. The timetable as the prime minister presented it to the U.S. President is as follows: To begin with, 'Arafat has to implement his commitments regarding Jerusalem and rectify violations in the sphere of security; only then will Israel discuss any redeployment in Hebron, the lifting of the closure, and the start of further redeployment. According to Netanyahu's aides, the U.S. Administration got the message. Cabinet Secretary Dani Nave:

[Begin Nave recording] The U.S. Administration understands today that to successfully promote the political process, things the Israeli Government wishes to emphasize should be emphasized. This is the chief political significance of this visit. [end recording]

The Americans allowed the prime minister to conclude his U.S. visit with a political achievement: an agreement on the establishment of a south Lebanon monitoring committee, and even better — a first, brief meeting between Dr. Dore Gold, the prime minister's political adviser, and Syrian Ambassador to Washington Walid al-Mu'allim.

[Begin Nave recording] We must distinguish between public rhetoric heard in various Arab capitals and the actual developments sometimes taking place in quiet contacts. We have announced our willingness to hold negotiations with Syria, to meet with the Syrians, to resume the negotiations with Syria to achieve a peace settlement. I would distinguish the agreement achieved yesterday which, as I said before, is the outcome of the memorandum of understandings that followed Operation Grapes of Wrath, from the process as a whole. [end recording]

Nave's remarks mean that although it was an important meeting, it was merely a preliminary contact aimed at probing the situation, and it means nothing with regard to the nature of future negotiations.

A senior element in Netanyahu's entourage said over the weekend that messages relayed by the Rabin and Peres governments allowed the Syrians to understand clearly and unequivocally that Israel was prepared to undertake full withdrawal from the Golan. Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu informed the United States: I am not committed to any oral agreements or messages, only to the written and signed agreements.

The Syrian track has been put into the deep freeze, and U.S. peace coordinator Dennis Ross' visit will focus mainly on an attempt to promote the Palestinian track, or at least to prevent it from collapsing.

Israel: Gold Admits No Basis to Claim of 'Secret' Accords

TA1407133796 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 14 Jul 96 p 5

[Report by special correspondent Shim'on Schiffer in New York]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Dr. Dore Gold, the prime minister's political adviser, admitted last night that his remarks to Qol Yisra'el correspondent Shlomo Raz over the weekend about the existence of secret documents between Israel and the Palestinians and the Syrians "that pose a real danger" were unsubstantiated. Gold explained that "there were no agreements about which the public was not informed."

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Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu also said there was no document signed by his predecessors about which the public was kept in the dark.

Gold told YEDI'OT AHARONOT that he had been surprised and disappointed by the approach taken by Peres' representatives in the talks with the Palestinians and by that taken earlier by Rabin and his aides in their contacts with the Syrians. Netanyahu's advisers explained over the weekend that they were amazed that the Labor government failed to insist that the Palestinian Authority [PA] adhere to the agreement — mainly in terrorism-related spheres — and that it even went as far as overlooking violations of the agreement. [passage omitted]

Israel: Basyuni Comments on Significance of Netanyahu Visit

TA1407121796 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking on the eve of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's trip to Cairo, Egyptian Ambassador Muhammad Basyuni said that it will be impossible to achieve peace in the region without returning land. Our correspondent Oren Kohen reports:

[Begin recording] [Kohen] Egypt's Ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni said that the Arab states do not care whether they sign a peace agreement with a Likud, Labor, or even a Meretz government as long as the countries in the region continue to directly pursue the peace process. Basyuni commented on Prime Minister Netanyahu's remarks in the United States and noted that what the Israeli prime minister says at this week's summit meeting will carry greater significance. Netanyahu has still not heard the Arab side, Basyuni explained. That is why his visit to Egypt is so important.

[Basyuni, in English] Because it will be the first time that Mr. Netanyahu will hear our view, honestly and frankly, about our positions. He, till now, did not hear what is the real position of the Arabs.

[Kohen translates above remarks into Hebrew and continues] We will welcome Netanyahu and explain the difference between the feasible and the impossible in relations between Israel and the Arab world. Basyuni warned against turning the Arab-Israeli conflict into a religious struggle between Judaism and Islam and suggested that any declarations on the status of Jerusalem be avoided before the final stage of the peace talks begins.

As for the concept of peace in exchange for peace, based on the three fundamental principles of Netanyahu's doctrine, Basyuni said that the Arabs view peace as a triangle with three equal sides. Therefore, it is impossible to achieve peace without the side that represents land.

[Basyuni, in English] It is impossible to have a solution because, as you know, the basis of the peace is land, peace, and security arrangements for both sides. So, if you miss the principle of land, it is impossible to reach the peace. [end recording]

[A similar report on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1100 GMT on 14 July adds that Basyuni said that "we do not want to push the Israeli prime minister into a corner but rather to provide him with an opportunity to promote peace. If Netanyahu does this, Egypt will support him." Amb. Basyuni added that Israel must honor its commitment to release prisoners, open the safe passage, and lift the closure.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0930 GMT 14 Jul 96 carries a recorded interview with Amb. Basyuni by Sha'ul Menashe on the "With the Midday Events" program. When asked what role Egypt can play in moderating the Syrian stance toward Israel, Basyuni replies: "An adage says: You need two to tango [preceding words in English]. This means that both sides must be flexible. There is no doubt that President Mubarak is striving to advance the peace process on its various tracks: the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks." Basyuni goes on to note, however, that "any peace talks must have a reference point in order to succeed" and that "a reference point does not mean preconditions. True, negotiations must be conducted without preconditions, but they must have a reference point." He adds: "We hope that the talks will on the Syrian track will also be resumed and that the two sides will sit down together, each side will present its viewpoint on the basis of the Madrid reference point, and then they will negotiate. I a sure, God willing, that we will reach agreements if there are sincere intentions and if the two sides wish to achieve real peace."]

Israel: Adviser — Netanyahu Pledges Gradual Pullout From Hebron

TA1307110996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] David Bar-Ilan, one of the prime minister's advisers, told our political correspondent Shlomo Raz that the pullout from Hebron is scheduled to be carried out gradually and that Israel will pose further security demands in addition to those posed by the previous government.

Bar-Ilan, director of the media and policy planning department at the prime minister's bureau, emphasized

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that Binyamin Netanyahu has pledged to accept all the agreements made with the Palestinians, including the one pertaining to Hebron. He pointed out that the prime minister spoke in this vein in his meeting with President Clinton in Washington.

Israel: Shahaq Says Hizballah Violating Understandings on Lebanon

TA1407131796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chief of Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahaq says that Hizballah is deviating from the understandings reached at the end of Operation Grapes of Wrath. It organizes inside built-up areas in southern Lebanon and uses them as a departure point for some of its terror attacks. The chief of staff emphasizes that the agreement reached in the wake of Operation Grapes of Wrath was to leave civilian locations outside the war zone, but this is being violated. Our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling reports that the chief of staff spoke with the crew of the Elat missile boat.

Israel: Minister Eytan To Waive Right to Preliminary Hearing

TA1407134096 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 14 Jul 96 p A5

[Report by Gid'on Alon]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Minister Refa'el Eytan has told Attorney General Mikha'el Ben-Ya'ir that he has decided to waive his right to a preliminary hearing. The minister of agriculture and environment informed Ben-Ya'ir of his decision through his attorney Ya'aqov Weinrott following reports that Ben-Ya'ir intended to hold preliminary hearings for three public officials against whom he has decided to press charges: Minister Eytan; Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert; and former Minister Gonen Segev. Eytan's attorney also informed the attorney general that the minister will ask the Knesset to lift his parliamentary immunity at once to enable him to face the court proceedings as soon as possible. [passage omitted]

In light of the fact that Eytan is not being charged with a felony, he is not required to suspend his membership in the cabinet once his parliamentary immunity is revoked and charges are presented against him in court. [passage omitted]

Israel: Council Plans 8 New Settlements, Expansion of Existing Ones

TA1407055496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Leaders of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza have drafted a plan for the establishment of new settlements and the expansion of existing ones in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza.

Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that a paper drafted by the council leaders last week contains a series of demands relating to settlement expansion which they plan to present to each and every government ministry. Our correspondent reports that the plan envisages the establishment of about eight new settlements and the civilianization of several Nahal Brigade military presettlements in the territories.

Council Chairman Pinhas Wallerstein told our correspondent that according to the council leaders' plan, the number of Jews in the territories will stand at 300,000-500,000 in four years. Ze'ev Hever, secretary of Amana, a movement promoting settlement in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, told our correspondent that a number of nuclei of new settlements have been set up recently, and Amana plans to launch population growth drives.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 14 July reports: "Labor Knesset Member [MK] Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer says that if the settlers' grand plan is implemented, the peace process in Judaea and Samaria will come to an end. Ben-Eli'ezer told our correspondent this morning that the plan is not new, as he remembers it from his term as the construction and housing minister.

["Reacting to the prime minister's observation in the United States that the number of settlers in Judaea and Samaria grew by 50 percent under the Labor government, Ben-Eli'ezer said that the Labor government built only in settlements around Jerusalem. He believed his party would hardly object to expansion if it is restricted to settlements around Jerusalem and in the 'Etzyon Bloc.

["Meretz MK Dedi Zucker said that only a negative reply to the settlers' plan will prove that the government intends to achieve a political solution. He added that if the government approves the settlement expansion plan, the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza will become the ruler of the country. Such a government policy will turn Israel into Yugoslavia. Furthermore, it will be tantamount to slamming the door in Yasir 'Arafat's face.

["The Peace Now movement says the plan constitutes an outright violation of the prime minister's pledge to achieve secure peace."]

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Israel: Defense, Agriculture Ministers Comment on Settlement Plans

TA1407135696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Mordekhay has rejected Shim'on Peres' assertion that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's declarations are uniting the Arab world against Israel.

The defense minister said that the government will continue the peace process and proposed that Israel and its neighbors jointly seek ways to calm the situation. He added that the government has not discussed the settlement plans prepared by the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip or any other new proposals. Therefore, any statements to this effect should be disregarded. Defense Minister Mordekhay was speaking to our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling after visiting the Israel Navy.

Agriculture Minister Refa'el Eytan has called for building new settlements in Judaea and Samaria and settling 500,000 Jews there. The minister was speaking to our correspondent Shim'on Vilna'i during a tour of the Vulcani Institute in Bet Dagan.

Israel: Ma'ale Adumim Plans To Double Population Within 4 Years

TA1507070396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 15 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Beni Kashri'el, the mayor of Ma'ale Adumim, 10 km east of Jerusalem, estimates that the town's population will double by the end of the Netanyahu government's term and exceed 40,000 inhabitants. He intends to present to the prime minister a plan for accelerated construction in Ma'ale Adumim and the settlements surrounding the capital in a bid to create territorial contiguity between them and Jerusalem. He is convinced that the plan will be approved and implemented. Gil Litman reports:

[Begin recording] [Litman] The mayor of Ma'ale Adumim, the only Jewish town in the territories, believes that the prime minister supports his plan. The expansion of Ma'ale Adumim enjoys consensus in the Knesset and among the public, says Kashri'el, and Binyamin Netanyahu knows it.

A delegation of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza called on the prime minister about two weeks ago. It included Kashri'el, who, incidentally, was elected acting chairman of the settlement council yesterday; Pinhas Walerstein, the new chairman; and Uri Ari'el, the council's director general. The three presented to the prime minister a document demanding the abolishment of the committee overseeing construction in the territories set up by the Labor government, the speedy completion of the bypass roads in Judaea and Samaria, and the expansion of construction, particularly in Greater Jerusalem settlements.

Kashri'el says his and his colleagues' main objective is to create a contiguity of houses and neighborhoods between the settlements surrounding Jerusalem and the capital itself.

[Kashri'el] I foresee over 40,000 people living in Ma'ale Adumim within four years. Within this decade, our population will exceed 60,000, and we can draw blueprints for 100,000 inhabitants. This does not only apply to Ma'ale Adumim, however. In my capacity as chairman of the Greater Jerusalem Forum, we submitted the Jerusalem Cincture Plan, which speaks of massive construction in the space between the surrounding settlements — the satellite settlements of Giv'at Ze'ev, Efrat, Betar, and Gush 'Etzyon — and Jerusalem.

[Litman] The plan was formulated two years ago, but the Labor government shelved it. Upon Netanyahu's victory in the elections, the plan has once again become relevant, Kashri'el says. To illustrate his goal, he says that when the plan is implemented, the distance between Jerusalem and Ma'ale Adumim, which currently stands at some 10 km, will be approximately like the distance between Ramat Gan and Giv'atayim. Ma'ale Adumim will stretch its territorial contiguity a few more km westward and will actually link up with the capital. [end recording]

Israel: Number of Terror Attack Alerts Said Up Since New Government

TA1407064796 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0400 GMT 14 Jul 96

[Report by army affairs correspondent Avi Lifshitz]

[FBIS Translated Text] Terrorist organizations will now try to prove that the Israeli political upheaval has not affected their operations, and that it may have even instigated them to plan new attacks.

Defense elements have told IDF Radio that the number of warnings about impending terrorist attacks has grown in the weeks since the establishment of the new government. This is believed to be due to the Arabs' general dissatisfaction with the outcome of the elections, among other things.

In addition of anticipating major bombings of the kind perpetrated in February and March, the defense establishment fears that terrorist activities in the territories, such as gunfire from moving vehicles on secondary

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roads and in bus stops, will continue or even be stepped up. The defense elements stress, however, that the Palestinian Authority is still highly interested in preventing terrorist attacks, especially before the Hebron redeployment is carried out.

As for Syria, against which the new government has announced a clear political line with regard to its terror-sponsoring stance, a defense element stressed that no unusual Syrian activity has been recorded on the ground in recent weeks. The element added, however, that should Syria so desire, it can spur Hizballah to step up its activities in south Lebanon's security zone. He pointed out that Syria is liable to unsettle the volatile situation in south Lebanon within a few days.

Israel: Police Clash With Thousands of Ultra-Orthodox in Jerusalem

TA1407101896 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 14 Jul 96 p 1

[Report by Bill Hutman and Evelyn Gordon]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] United Torah Judaism [UTJ] announced last night that it will file a no-confidence motion against the government unless Jerusalem police chief Arye 'Amit is fired instantly, due to what the party termed a police "pogrom" against demonstrators on Bar-Ilan Street over Shabbat.

Thousands of haredim [ultra-Orthodox] demanding the road's closure on Shabbat clashed yesterday with police and secular demonstrators who challenged the haredim by driving up and down the road.

MK [Knesset Member] Avraham Ravitz (UTJ) said that while the party does not want to bring down a government of which it is part, it sees no other way to force 'Amit and various other senior police officials out. Simply discussing the problem with the government, he said, did not work.

Ravitz said he tried to head off a confrontation by calling 'Amit on Friday [12 July] to ask him to close the road on Shabbat. Though the Transport Ministry could not close the road because of a High Court of Justice injunction, the police have the right to do so if necessary to preserve the peace, he explained.

"I told him that when 10,000 people are demonstrating there, the road must be closed to prevent bloodshed," he said.

However, he continued, 'Amit not only refused to close the road, but then used excessive violence against the demonstrators.

"They conducted a pogrom against Jews," he said. "They beat women, they beat children, they went into houses...."

After this, he said, the party sees no way to continue living with 'Amit in command of the Jerusalem police.

"We respect the (haredi residents') way of life, but we aren't going to allow them to force it upon us," said Meretz city councillor Ornan Yequti'eli, who led the secular protesters' motorcade yesterday afternoon.

About 50 cars took part in the motorcade. Yequti'eli said next week Meretz would organize supporters from Tel Aviv and other areas to protest against the closure of the road, which leads to Jerusalem's northern neighborhoods.

Haredi residents said they are the majority in the area, and it is their right to quiet on Shabbat. There are alternative roads secular drivers can use if Bar-Ilan is closed, they said.

Haredi activist Yehuda Meshi-Zahav said a protest next Shabbat would include "tens of thousands of people," and protests would continue until the road is closed.

The weekend unrest followed a High Court ruling on Friday postponing implementation of the plan to close the road during prayer times on Shabbat, a plan proponents hoped would return calm to the Jerusalem thoroughfare. [passage omitted]

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Jordan: Information Minister on Terrorism, Relations With Syria

TA1507103196 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 12 Jul 96 p 11

[Interview with Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, Jordanian minister of information, by unidentified correspondent in Amman; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [AL-QUDS] The news media recently reported that Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti will visit Damascus at the end July.

[Al-Mu'ashshir] There are no specific plans regarding this matter. Contacts are under way for holding a meeting. The form and level of this meeting have not been determined at this point, although most probably it will be at the leadership level.

[AL-QUDS] Jordan has accused Syria more than once that it is the source of terrorism to which Jordan is being subjected by organizations operating from Damascus. Have you received any promises from the Syrian leadership that it will halt such operations?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] In fact, several operations were launched from Syrian territory by organizations that operate in Syria. We placed all the details at the disposal of our Syrian brothers, who promised to study this file very carefully. We will resume discussion of this file when the expected meeting is held shortly.

[AL-QUDS] Jordan has raised its differences with Syria which are epitomized in two points: First, the issue of terrorism; and second, disagreement over the peace process and relations with Israel. Have these issues been discussed with the Syrian side, and what was their answer?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] Of course. The king handed Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad a complete file containing all the details, and our Syrian brothers promised to study it. As for the peace process, each country has its own interpretation of the peace issue, but we do not believe that this divergence should be an obstacle to the aspired breakthrough in Jordanian-Syrian relations.

We support the Syrian side in this process so that it will be able to regain the Golan up to the borders of 4 June. At the same time, we believe that all the Arab states and Israel agreed in Madrid to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict by peaceful means. There is no room to talk about a breakthrough in the solution since Syria is still negotiating to achieve what Jordan achieved through a peace agreement. Hence, differences in viewpoints remain, but relations with Israel should not affect the relationship between Jordan and Syria.

[AL-QUDS] Jordan has announced that it was subjected to operations that harm its internal security. Where has the investigation on this matter reached, and is Jordan still being subjected to such operations?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] What I said about organizations in Syria which tried to carry out operations inside Jordan falls within this framework, but these operations were not carried out by one party and have not stopped completely. Some operations took place recently. Praise be to God, the security services were very alert and so far no security event has happened. It is not always wise to report such operations. The important thing is that we are confident of the security services, which have succeeded in thwarting all these operations. I believe it is not prudent to go into details. [passage omitted]

Jordan: 'Source' Cited on Border Security Talks With Syria

MM1507140396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Jul 96 p 1

[Unattributed Report: "Jordanian Source Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Amman, Damascus Decided on Measures To Halt Infiltration and Restrict Palestinian Organizations' Movement"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — A Jordanian government source has said that Amman has reached agreement with Damascus on restricting the movement of some Palestinian organizations that are based in Syria and are trying to establish an armed extension in Jordan and to infiltrate the Jordanian-Israeli border. The two sides agreed to consider the border a red zone closed to organizations opposed to the peace process.

The Jordanian source confirmed that meetings were held in the middle of last week between Jordanian and Syrian officials — namely security, border guard, and customs officers — to eliminate the tension and clear the air between the two countries. The source added that the talks focused on the issue of organizing work on the border, preventing smuggling operations, and cooperating in exchanging information about arms smuggling operations carried out by armed groups.

The source pointed out that the Jordanians expressed their concern over the increase in cattle and cigarette smuggling operations across the northern border, which substantially harms the Jordanian economy. During the security talks with the Syrian side the Jordanian side also focused on the drug smuggling operations into Jordan from Lebanese territory via Syrian territory, which are targeting the Jordanian and Gulf markets.

The source said that the Syrians also expressed their concern over the increase in gold smuggling operations

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from Jordan to Syria, which harms the Syrian economy, since the smuggled gold finds its way to the Syrian market without the Syrian Government levying the necessary taxes of 200 percent [of the value].

The Syrians also raised the issue of the smuggling of gasoline and diesel to Syria via Jordan. Last Wednesday [10 July] the Jordanian authorities staged a large-scale sweep in the border province of al-Ramtha in search of gasoline and diesel smuggled to Syria, seizing some 100,000 gallons hidden in residents' apartments and houses.

The source said that the Jordanians and the Syrians agreed to intensify the meetings in order to eliminate any tension or dispute liable to disrupt relations between the two countries. It was also agreed to regard the Jordanian-Syrian border as a red zone closed to the groups opposed to the peace process. The two sides are expected to resume their meetings after King Husayn's meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus, expected to take place in Damascus early next month.

Jordan: U.S. Said Searching for Formula To Continue Peace Talks

JN1307101496 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 13 Jul 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by Lamis Andoni]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Boston—The American administration is engaged in a serious assessment of prospects for the Middle East peace process in light of Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu's visit to Washinton last week, well-informed sources in Washington said.

American officials refused to comment on Mr. Netanyahu's visit saying that they were not ready to give an assessment yet. The American official position reflects concern that the U.S. will be able to reconcile between its commitments to its strategic ally, Israel, and the continuity of the peace process.

The hardline stance that Mr. Netanyahu reiterated last week in Washington has made this seemingly delicate task more complex, according to analysts and observers. Arab-American leaders in Washington said that the administration had sought to send a reassuring signal to Arab governments engaged in the peace process.

"They (American officials) are telling us that in private American officials have made it clear to Netanyahu that the U.S. expects Israel to adhere to the land-for-peace principle," said one Arab-American leader, who preferred anonymity.

But other Arab-American community leaders are skeptical that the American administration would put any pressure on Mr. Netanyahu, at least not before the American presidential elections in November.

"What is said behind closed doors is not that relevant if there is no action. We don't think that the administration will take any action whatsoever," said Khalil Jahshan, president of the National Arab-American Association (NAAA).

The NAAA, which groups the major Arab-American organisations, has already issued a statement slamming the American administration for accommodating Mr. Netanyahu in spite of his hardline rhetoric.

American press reports, especially in the Boston Globe, quoted Mr. Netanyahu's advisors as saying that the Israeli leader had told President Bill Clinton that his government would not expand Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza but will carry out serious negotiations with the Palestinians.

Yet, according to Gary Rubin, the representative of the Peace Now Movement in New York, the real test would be Mr. Netanyahu's policies on the ground and the American government reaction to them.

Mr. Rubin, who was among American-Jewish leaders, who met Mr. Netanyahu in New York, said that whatever Mr. Netanyahu might have told American officials in private would mean nothing if he decided to pursue his publicly declared hardline policies.

According to analysts Mr. Netanyahu's style of presenting his hardline policies to be consistent with American free market values succeeded in convincing American politicians and most leaders of the American-Jewish community to give him time to put his policies to test.

According to a poll conducted by the Israel Policy Forum last week, most Jewish-Americans are more than willing to give Mr. Netanyahu a chance. While 59.1 per cent of Jewish-Americans questioned said they would have voted for Shim'on Peres in last May elections—compared to 37 per cent for Mr. Netanyahu—61.5 per cent said they were favourable to the new prime minister.

His declared slogan of "peace and security" resonated well with American politicians, from both the Democratic and Republican parties, who want to appear tough on combating terrorism, especially in a crucial election.

His insistence on a united Jerusalem was also welcomed by both parties in the Congress that had already voted to move the American embassy to Jerusalem.

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While Mr. Netanyahu's stance on Jerusalem provoked anger and concern in the Arab World, the American Congress and Senate did not perceive it as an indication of Israeli extremism since Israeli Labour Party leaders, such as Mr. Peres, shared the same position on the Holy City.

But by making a very forceful stand on Jerusalem analysts say, Mr. Netanyahu placed the Clinton administration in an awkward position for fear that a premature discussion of the issue, prior to the start of the final status negotiations, could seriously undermine the peace process.

"The administration has yet to find a way out of this awkward situation. It will have to reassure the Arabs that the peace process is meaningful but without casting doubts on its commitment to the security of Israel," said a well-informed American source.

A group of over 150 rabbis, from the Jewish Peace Foundation, have called on the administration to cut down aid to Israel if the current government expanded the Israeli settlements but the Clinton administration was unlikely to heed such calls.

Jordan: Netanyahu Cannot Repeat Congress Remarks During Amman Visit

JN1307121196 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 13 Jul 96 pp 24, 20

["Last Station" column by Salih al-Qallab: "Facts More Important Than Applause"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu knows that he cannot say in Cairo and Amman, which he will visit soon, what he said in the United States over the past four days. Speeches there were meant to emphasize to the American Jews that he is the crowned king of Israel, but here, he will speak about facts on the ground.

In the United States, Netanyahu spoke in an ugly and racist manner when he arrogantly promised that the Arabs would be forced to adjust to the new reality in Israel. This is something that he cannot say in Cairo or Amman. He also cannot say no to withdrawal from the Golan, that he will continue construction of settlements, and that the Palestinian state will not be established.

Binyamin Netanyahu may have got a superiority complex when his no's concerning Jerusalem were met with loud applause by the U.S. Congress members or most of them, but if he is politically mature enough he will know that this applause is worthless, and that there are requirements that should be met if he wants Israel not to remain a mere large ghetto in the region or a mere temporary invasion like several invasions the region witnessed in its long history.

Let Binyamin Netanyahu say whatever he wants, but he should know well that the balance of power that led him to megalomania will not continue for ever, and that the world which looks after its interests in this region has begun to liberate itself from the old guilt complex which controlled it since the World War II. He should also know that any Arab leader or citizen cannot ignore the Jerusalem question, and will never bow to the peace imposed from one side.

Binyamin Netanyahu said that unified Jerusalem is the perpetual capital of Israel, and we say that Jerusalem is one of the holiest places for the Arabs and Muslims, and it will be the capital of the independent Palestinian state. When two logics totally contradict, the final say will be left for the future, and the future is undoubtedly for the Arab nation, whose history seems to be not read well by the Israeli prime minister, with his superiority complex.

Netanyahu will not benefit from the loud applause by the U.S. congressmen in admiration for what he said in a moment of superiority feeling based on the current balance of power. If he is a skillful politician and strategist—and he is not—then he should be aware that it is better for Israel to descend from the sky to earth and seize this opportunity that may not recur in this region.

Jordan: 'All' Hamas 'Sympathizers' Released From Prison

JN1507101196 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 15 Jul 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Musa al-Aqtash, former professor at Yarmuk University, and 'Umar Abu-Sharkh, a postgraduate student, were released last week. The two were arrested on charges of sympathizing with the Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement. This measure means that all Hamas sympathizers who were arrested following the Sharm al-Shaykh summit have been released.

Jordan: King Addresses Officers on Bread Price Hike, Other Issues

JN1307201696 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1735 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Speech by Jordan's King Husayn during an inspection visit to the Command of the 4th Royal Mechanized Division on 13 July—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Regarding the division's activities, in terms of its responsibilities, action, and effort, God willing, it will always be in the lead, along

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with all the formations and divisions of our Armed Forces. [passage omitted]

As sons of this homeland, you must have heard the recent dialogue on the wheat price issue. I will give the prime minister and defense minister the chance to add something in this regard. [passage omitted]

Two days ago, I was with the prime minister when he met with journalists. I imposed my presence on this meeting. The prime minister asked me not to attend the meeting because he wants to assume responsibility for the issue by himself, along with his government. However, I am in the position of father and brother to all of you. So, I wanted my stand toward these measures and toward any other measures in the future to be clear, God willing, as long as they are in the interest of this homeland and citizen. Some people are regrettably motivated by policies that do not belong to this country and this people. Some sides try to foil any effort to enable this country to stand on its feet at all times and under all circumstances. Some people have taken up harming all that is sacred and dear and distorting all that is beautiful and good as a profession. But praise be to God, this homeland has always been good. The story is simply that there are wheat prices in this world, and our citizen have suffered and endured as a result of the circumstances we have experienced.

The difference between the world price and the existing price, as I believe the prime minister will explain to you, will be added to the salary of every member of the Armed Forces. Each member will also be given an additional allowance, for which we will select an appropriate name to show that it also symbolizes the Jordanian citizen's contribution to serving his country and to working for its future. There should be an appropriate name for it so that every citizen will have enough.

God willing, conditions will improve and will mark the beginning of the true improvement to give us a chance to tell the others in this world that we have made full reforms in all fields. Thus, we will then deserve further support and aid to the process of building the homeland, developing the land and everything on it, with the zeal of the young people, their awareness, and faithfulness, so that we will have the Jordan that we all wish for, God willing. May God help and bless you. [applause]

May God help the lofty ones. We know that you work day and night on the borders of this country. You do your duty. We know about the explosives, mines, and weapons that flow from here and there to foment sedition, harm this homeland, and tarnish its reputation. Praise be to God before anything else. Thanks to you all, to the vigilant people, the clear consciences, and high heads. May God help and bless you all. Greetings to all the brothers. God willing, I will always be with you and among you. May God's peace and blessing be upon you. [applause]

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Lebanon: Iranian Ambassador Rejects 'Terrorism' Charges

NC1107184796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 11 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iranian Ambassador to Lebanon Homayun 'Alizadeh rebutted those who accuse Iran of terrorism. Following his meeting with scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, the Iranian ambassador said that if confronting the occupation is considered terrorism, then many countries are terrorists. He added: We are proud of our support for the Lebanese people and government in confronting the Zionist occupation. I wonder who are the terrorists? Is it us or the one who attacks civilians with warplanes and commits massacres? 'Alizadeh asked.

Lebanon: Hizballah's Nasrallah Vows To Resist Israel

NC1107182496 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 11 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah Secretary General Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah emphasized that all the Jews are not worth a mosquito wing in the eyes of the believers. During a religious ceremony held by Hizballah in Harat Hurayk [in Beirut], Nasrallah said that Lebanon is no longer the weak link. He maintained that a war with Lebanon and on Lebanese territory is not a mere pleasure trip because there are men in Lebanon who are not afraid of death or fighting. Nasrallah promised the Israelis that just as magic was turned against the magician in July 1993 and April 1996, the Likud magic will turn against the magician shortly and this enemy will only reap defeat.

Lebanon: Defense Minister Views 'Talk of Partial Israeli Withdrawal'

NC1207170196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 12 July 96

[FBIS Translated Text] National Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul stated that talk of a partial Israeli withdrawal from some positions in the south constitutes an Israeli maneuver aimed at covering up its true intentions. He added that this talk aims to stir up contradictions within Lebanese society.

The defense minister asserted that Israel does not want to withdraw but wants to mislead the public, conceal its aggressive intentions, and dismember the Lebanese rank.

Lebanon: Hizballah Paper Reports Criticism of U.S. Ambassador

NC1207203496 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 5 Jul 96 p 6

[FBIS Translated Text] American interference in internal Lebanese affairs, primarily on the election level, is being sharply criticized. Every statement by the U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones includes a reference to the Lebanese elections and the call to render them democratic and impartial. He also points to the need for all sides to participate, which some people consider as blatant interference in issues that concern Lebanon alone.

Observers are surprised that no official Lebanese reaction, reflecting the minimum of the State's dignity, has been issued on Jones' statements.

Lebanon: Hizballah's Nasrallah Criticizes U.S. Envoy's 'Interference'

NC1207175496 Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 8 Jul 96 p 5

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Zahlah — Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah criticized U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones' interference in Lebanon's internal affairs, adding that the party's battle "in the elections is a battle against the Americans."

Hizballah was marking one week since the death of Resistance fighter Muhammad Mustafa Haydar Ahmad at the al-Karak Mosque. The event was attended by Deputies Ibrahim Amin al-Sayyid, Muhammad Yaghi, 'Ali Mita, Ibrahim Bayan, Shaykh 'Ali Taha, and other figures.

In his speech Nasrallah criticized officials and politicians in Lebanon. He said: "None of them has enough time to comment on Netanyahu's insistence on letting the occupation face the possibility of withdrawal from the south and western al-Biqa.'" He added: "It is our misfortune that the elections coincide with a dangerous regional situation." [passage omitted]

He also criticized the U.S. ambassador, "who is overtly interfering in internal affairs but without anyone speaking about this interference," and noted that "the U.S. ambassador is boasting that he wants the elections to be free and to contain the influence of Hizballah's parliamentary presence." He regarded this as an "anticipation of the results whereas the people are concerned with who will represent them and their options."

Nasrallah noted that "Hizballah is respected by a large sector of the Lebanese people as a result of its political, popular, and jihad performance and that the party's battle in the elections will be against the Americans.

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The issue is one of morale." He added: "One of the most important results of the 1992 elections is that the people who voted told the world that 'Abbas al-Musawi and Shyakh Raghib Harb were not members of a terrorist organization, but of a resistance that lives in the people's will and a nation's conscience. In the 1996 elections the Americans and others are only concerned with saying that the resistance, which stood fast in April and became a thorn in Peres' side, does not have any popularity." [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Hizballah Chief, Russian Envoy Discuss April Understanding

NC1207172496 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 28 Jun 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] The Hizballah secretary general, His Eminence Hasan Nasrallah, received new Russian Ambassador to Lebanon Oleg Peresypkin at the general secretariat premises. The talks during the meeting dealt with Lebanon and the repeated Israeli violations of the April Understanding.

In a statement after the meeting, the Russian ambassador noted that the talks also touched on the current situation in Lebanon following the Likud's assumption of power. The ambassador expressed his extreme denunciation of the violations of the April Understanding through the bombardment of residential areas and abduction of civilians. Ambassador Peresypkin voiced his support for the resistance against the occupation, noting that the Arab summit in Cairo has declared its support for the resistance.

The Russian ambassador added that His Eminence Hasan Nasrallah briefed him on the party's political program and the current political situation. He said that Moscow is a friend of the Arabs in general and the Lebanese people in particular, stressing that Moscow wants to see Lebanon an independent sovereign state and the border strip liberated from the Israeli occupation.

Alluding to the U.S. bias toward the Zionist entity in the settlement negotiations, the Russian ambassador called on the United States to be neutral and not be biased in favor of any side.

Lebanon: Hizballah Issues Communique Criticizing Arab Summit

NC1207181796 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 28 Jun 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah stated that the Arab summit resolutions did not rise to the challenge of regional developments, particularly after the Likud bloc assumed power in the Zionist entity and raised its no's. These no's mean nothing but a declaration of war against the Arabs and their regimes and rights.

Hizballah noted that the clear signal distinguishing between the Arab peoples' right to resistance and terrorism was a good step, especially after the ambiguity that characterized the Arab stand following the Sharm al-Shaykh conference on this issue.

This came in a communique released by Hizballah on the Cairo Arab summit and its results and resolutions.

The communique said: Despite the positive slant we observed at this Arab gathering, at a time when a mere meeting is regarded as a positive development, we believe that the resolutions were not as important as the challenges posed by regional developments. This is especially so after the Likud bloc assumed power in the Zionist entity and raised its no's that mean nothing but a declaration of war against the Arabs and their regimes and rights.

The communique added: No doubt every Arab citizen was hoping that the summit, its resolutions, and outcome would meet the current challenges and the dangers facing the nation through the continuing Zionist policy of aggression and expansion. In the face of the enemy's blustering and unbridled arrogance by challenging the Arabs and their dignity and rights, the conferees were supposed to make a comprehensive assessment of the settlement process and the labyrinths through which some Arab regimes were lost and the effects of these events that show the weakness, frailty, and division suffered by the nation.

The communique noted that this state of affairs dictated the necessity to mobilize efforts and resources in a way guaranteeing that an end will be put to the U.S.-Zionist recklessness and frivolity toward the nation and its peoples and resources.

The communique added: If we saw that some of the recommendations were a prelude to reassessing the Arab stand and situation, we believe that the efforts exerted by Syria represented by President Hafiz al-Asad were the primary element that helped achieve some positive results. They came as a confirmation of the language of Syrian politics in handling the settlement process. Besides, the clear indication of distinguishing between the Arab peoples' right to resistance and terrorism is a positive step, especially after the ambiguity that marked the Arab stand at the Sharm al-Shaykh conference on this point.

In its communique, Hizballah highlighted the seriousness of some normalization steps that coincided with the summit, because they provide indications that the

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stand of some Arab regimes is not serious in dealing with the summit's resolutions and recommendations.

The communique added: While we caution against huge dangers and challenges, we see that it is not too late to activate and back the Arab position and make it serious and committed, especially toward a crucial cause such as the conflict with the enemy. This cause represents a principal concern—no one can wash his hands of it.

The communique said: The approach to this can only be through joint action to confront the Israeli danger and provide actual support for everyone seeking to liberate Arab territories from the yoke of Zionist occupation. This is in addition to focusing on building a cohesive stand in cooperation with friends and brothers, particularly those who adopt positions supportive of the Arab right and who are not drawn to negative U.S. and other suggestions and temptations. It is clear that these suggestions and temptations have no goal, but to deflect attention and concern from focusing on the challenge of the Zionist occupation and aggression to imagined fringe dangers stemming from disputes among brothers and differences among friends.

Hizballah emphasized that the Arab peoples and all dynamic forces in the region, primarily the resistance in the south and the occupied land, are mobilized and ready to engage in any stand that could be adopted as a response to the continuous challenges and threats from the Zionist enemy and his ally, the United States. The United States has very explicitly declared war on the region by adopting the enemy's policies and encouraging the enemy to establish military and security alliances that will only harm pan-Arab security.

Lebanon: Hizballah Claims Responsibility for Anti-SLA Attack

NC1507093296 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0815 GMT 15 July 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah claimed responsibility for an operation against Lahd forces [South Lebanese Army, SLA] on the al-Jibbayn road in the western sector of the security zone. A statement by Hizballah said that a group of the Islamic Resistance detonated an explosive device as an SLA infantry patrol was passing on the road to al-Jibbayn today. The explosion inflicted several casualties, the statement said. A United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] source has confirmed to AFP that a large explosion took place in the area, without giving further details.

Lebanon Approves Cease-Fire Monitoring Committee

NC1407121096 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1135 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz stated that Lebanon approved the formula forming the committee tasked with monitoring the cease-fire in accordance with the April Understanding. At a news conference, he said no date had been set for the first committee meeting, noting that it might not meet unless a complaint is lodged. He said:

[Begin Buwayz recording] The issue has been settled through a compromise, that is, the three countries—the United States, France, and Syria, which are not directly concerned with any complaint—will consult with the representatives of the two countries directly concerned. The committee will meet in al-Naqurah when a complaint is lodged. If there is a unanimous decision, it will serve as a final stand. But if there is no unanimous decision the complaint will be referred to the foreign ministers of the three countries and they will consult with the foreign ministers of the two countries over the issue. [end recording] [passage omitted]

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Syria: Al-Shar', Lebanon's Buwayz Consult on Cease-Fire Meeting

JN1307205296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz received a phone call from Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' today. Lebanon's NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY said that the two ministers discussed the results of the Washington meeting of the five states concerned with the April understanding to implement the cease-fire in southern Lebanon.

Syria: Press on Damascus Declaration Meeting, Netanyahu Statements

JN1507093496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 15 Jul 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] TISHRIN comments on the final statement issued by the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers in Muscat. The statement was issued after the ministers deliberated the situation in the region and Arab and regional affairs. TISHRIN says the meeting of the Damascus Declaration states has special significance under the current circumstances and challenges. This is because the meeting came on the heels of the expanded Arab summit, which specified the means to adhere to the principles and foundations of achieving a just and comprehensive peace.

TISHRIN adds that promoting inter-Arab relations is an important and major element to protect our Arab rights and preserve our existence. The paper highlights the decisions and recommendations made by the foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration states, especially asserting their concern about the principles and foundations of a just and comprehensive peace, and the firm and principled commitment to the bases of the Madrid conference. The purpose of this is to ensure full and unconditional withdrawal from southern Lebanon and western al-Biqa' and Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, including Arab Jerusalem, and securing the Palestinian people's legitimate national right to self-determination and establishing an independent state on their national soil.

TISHRIN asserts that Israel's departure from these principles and foundations makes it responsible for the possible collapse of the peace process. The foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration states warned of this possibility when they said that the intransigent stands of Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu will return the region to a cycle of tension and make Arab countries reconsider the steps taken toward Israel as part of the peace process.

TISHRIN concludes: Stemming from this, Netanyahu's allegations that the Arabs will adapt to his positions and arguments are false because the Arabs have rights and can never abandon these rights. Occupation is the antithesis of peace. Peace can never be achieved under occupation of any inch of Arab land.

In a commentary entitled "Peace Brings Security, Not Vice Versa," AL-BA'TH says Israel does not care at all about the peace process. The whole world is now aware of this following Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit to the United States and his talks with U.S. officials.

AL-BA'TH notes that international — and even Israeli — news media said that Netanyahu's government is working to implement its own platform and is creating one pretext after another to blow up the peace process. Netanyahu's statements in Washington were not against the Arabs alone but against everyone who is working to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Since he assumed power, Netanyahu has been beating the drums of war, leveling accusations against the Arabs, and urging the world to adopt his own views. Netanyahu rejects the frame of reference of the peace process, particularly the land-for-peace principle. Thus, he rejects the essence of the U.S. initiative. In spite of this, we have so far not heard a word that bothers Netanyahu from those who launched the peace initiative.

AL-BA'TH adds: Those who say they are extremely concerned about establishing real peace in the region should stop asserting their unlimited support for Israel and its policies. This is because their support encourages Israel to commit further stupidities whose consequences could be difficult to predict.

AL-BA'TH concludes: The Arabs, including Syria, have proven in word and deed their credibility toward the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region — peace that restores rights to their owners and provides security and stability for all. However, it is known that peace is impossible to achieve at the expense of the Arabs, their rights, and dignity.

Syria: Netanyahu's Position on Peace Criticized

JN1407101996 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0455 GMT 14 Jul 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its editorial, TISHRIN discusses the seriousness of the Israeli position, which rejects peace through Netanyahu's no's — headed by no to withdrawal from the Golan, alleging that this withdrawal will expose Israel to threat and danger and that

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keeping the Golan is vital to ensuring security, which, according to Netanyahu, should precede peace.

The newspaper adds: Netanyahu's no's and the imposition of pretexts, deception, and baseless allegations have nothing to do with the facts of history, politics, and logic.

The newspaper says: The Golan is Syrian-Arab land that was occupied through Israeli aggression in 1967. It emphasizes: Security in the region will not be realized without Israel's withdrawal to the lines of 4 June 1967 lines, before the Israeli expansionist aggression. Likewise, security does not come before peace, but peace is what leads to and guarantees security.

The newspaper says: The aspired peace is a just peace based on the return of land to its Arab owners and restoration of the occupied Golan. This peace is also the one that leads to Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem.

TISHRIN says: Israel maneuvers and rejects the bases and pillars of a just and comprehensive peace; therefore, the peace process continued to be stalemated.

TISHRIN concludes: Netanyahu should not consider his widely denounced position, represented by keeping the Golan, as a basis for negotiations on the Syrian track. The Madrid conference defined this basis, which is full withdrawal from the Golan in accordance with Resolution 242. Syria will not cede an inch of its land, and the occupation will never undermine any of its right to restore the Golan en route to a just and comprehensive peace, regardless of the passage of time.

AL-BA'TH discusses the importance of the European role in the peace process. It says: The Israeli prime minister's visit to Washington and the results of this visit cloud the peace process. Observers agreed that Netanyahu has led this process to a dead end and that he reneged on its bases.

On the current situation of the peace process in light of this Israeli position, the newspaper says: There are three main elements opposite the Israeli rejectionist position. The first is the unified Arab position, as demonstrated by the Cairo summit statement. This position adheres to the peace process, its bases, and terms of reference. It emphasizes that the Arabs advocate peace.

The second element concerns the cosponsors of the peace process. In this context, it can be said that the Russian political situation has not allowed for an effective effort by this sponsor so far. The U.S. situation, which is linked to the presidential elections, also does not allow for continuing the previous situation, taking into consideration the Clinton administration's offered several signs of leniency and appeasement toward Netanyahu's rejectionist positions.

AL-BA'TH adds: The third element is represented in the European position, which was timid and ineffective in the past, but has now begun to assume its expected role.

AL-BA'TH calls for a broader and more effective European role in order to activate the peace efforts and not to allow time-wasting.

AL-BA'TH concludes: France, led by Chirac, is making an effort to advance the peace process. Like other European countries, it is concerned with realizing a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the Madrid's terms of reference, which were met with world approval.

In one of its editorials, AL-THAWRAH comments on the Israeli prime minister's visit to Washington. It says: In Washington, in presence of the president of the superpower that is sponsoring the peace process, Netanyahu canceled five years of political efforts aimed at reaching a solution to the conflict on the basis of land for peace and the implementation of the resolutions of the international legitimacy.

AL-THAWRAH says: The Israeli prime minister's visit and the hardline and extremist positions he showed on all issues related to peace constituted a radical turnaround in the political process, the abortion of this process, and all bets on a change in the behavior and positions of the new leaders in Tel Aviv in terms of opting for peace. It was a hard surprise for the U.S. Administration, which repeatedly called for waiting and giving Netanyahu chance, hoping that the election slogans would be changed and the principle of peace would be accepted.

Netanyahu led another election campaign into the heart of the United States in which he continued his open war against peace, consolidated his unequivocal rejection of its bases and terms of reference, and turned its formula upside down amid the silence and surprise of the Americans. This makes peace and the continuation of the peace process impossible.

Such a policy, which is full of expansionist dreams and the illusions of superiority and domination and derives strength from outside support would not have gone far in defying the international legitimacy and reneging on the UN principles and resolutions if the U.S. Administration had adopted a firm position; if it had relinquished its hesitant positions and opted to maintain the prestige of the superpower and the credibility of its initiatives and guarantees it offered to the peace process; and if it

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had corrected Israel's attempts to deviate and delay the march of the political process. Had it done so, it would have saved a great deal of effort, suffering, and time, and the region would have enjoyed peace, security, and stability.

AL-THAWRAH concludes by emphasizing: Restoring the occupied lands in the Golan, southern Lebanon, and all other occupied Arab territories will continue to be our constant concern and utmost priority. It is something that cannot be bargained with or relinquished. The new Likud government should shoulder the responsibility, before the international community, for the consequences of any setback in the peace process.

Syria: Israel Warned Not To Turn Its Back on Peace Process

JN1307154896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: We were not surprised by what Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu did or said in Washington. We were not under the illusion that he would adopt a position different from the one he made a clear effort to demonstrate as the candidate of the extremist, religious right in Israel.

It is now evident that Netanyahu the prime minister is no different from Netanyahu the candidate. The same Netanyahu went into the White House and the U.S. Congress and came out with the same arguments and positions, as well as a strange type of arrogance and conceit. The same person also won a standing ovation from the members of Congress for his arguments, which run counter to peace and seek to maintain the occupation and impose settlements in accordance with the twisted Israeli concept of peace and the Torah-based vocabulary that Netanyahu used in his political statements to represent his hope of establishing greater Israel.

Apart from making acquaintances, Netanyahu's visit produced negative impressions. It also gave rise to a host of pessimistic expectations about the future of the peace process. In his speech to Congress and his news conference with U.S. President Bill Clinton, Netanyahu added new conditions to his three no's. He confirmed a growing trend that seeks to exercise a new form of the policy of extortion, political terrorism, and threats to use military terrorism to end the peace process and place the region in the face of serious prospects. This trend also seeks to escalate matters and return the region to the stage of tension and explosion.

The files that Netanyahu took to Washington translated his three no's: no to the establishment of a Palestinian state, no to withdrawal from the Golan Heights, and no to the division of Jerusalem. These three no's occupied a prominent place in his election and government programs. This fact brought about the quick collapse of all the wagers that urged people not to make hasty judgments of Netanyahu and called for waiting for realistic policies and for viewing Netanyahu as a pragmatist who must change the facts of his election campaign.

The Israeli Government's position has started to assume its full dimensions in terms of its hostility toward peace and its rejection of the Madrid terms of reference and the basic principle of the negotiations; namely, the land-for-peace formula. The damage caused by this position has begun to touch even the U.S. Administration, which is now facing a real test. It must confirm its credibility as a superpower that shoulders the great responsibility of implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy, fulfills its obligations, defends its initiative, and seeks to rescue all the efforts to achieve the just and comprehensive peace. Only this kind of peace can provide the basic pillar of mutual security and stability for all parties.

If the Israeli Government is, in effect, turning its back on the peace process and seems to be interested only in things that runs counter to the peace efforts, then it will be very dangerous if it succeeds in closing the door before the peace process can resume and advance. The consequences of the collapse of the peace opportunity will not be in the interests of peace or those who advocate it, or in the interest of the security and stability of a region that is important to the entire world, considering the vital and strategic interests in it.

Undoubtedly, the chance for peace, which is now diminishing because of Netanyahu's arguments, will remain in danger unless the United States and the other influential states in the world try to curb Israel's unacceptable avoidance of international legitimacy, the commitments of peace, and the world community's hopes for achieving security and stability in the region on the basis of the just and comprehensive solution that guarantees the return of land and rights to their rightful owners and mutual security on the basis of parallelism, equality, and equitability.

Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories undermines the land-for-peace principle, continuing settlement activity threatens stability, and creating priorities other than the peace process will lead to escalation and explosion. All this requires an effective U.S. and world intervention to shoulder the responsibility of

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boosting the peace process. Netanyahu must be faced with the facts produced during the long march of the peace process so that he can reconsider his positions and abandon his illusions. The region and developments in it cannot be at his command and land and rights cannot be tailored to his Torah-based dreams.

Syria: Damascus Radio Denounces Israeli Prime Minister's Statements

JN1207150096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1139 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Anyone who follows up on Netanyahu's statements since he won the Israeli elections will discover that the new Israeli prime minister is dropping from his program the issue of the occupied Arab territories and that Netanyahu considers annexing these territories as nonnegotiable.

He will also discover that the peace Netanyahu wants must be linked to fulfilling Israel's security requirements, and that the other side—the Arabs—should adapt themselves to Netanyahu's policy and give up any preconditions if they want to negotiate with him.

According to the leader of the extremist Israeli right wing, the objective of peace is to achieve Israel's security and attain Arab acceptance of the fait accompli of occupation. As Netanyahu claims, an incomplete occupation will threaten Israel's security. As a result, and according to Netanyahu's concept, the Arabs' call for implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy— resolutions that emphasize the Arabs' right to regain their occupied territories and secure the Palestinian national rights to repatriation and to the establishment of an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital—represents preconditions, so he refuses to resume the peace negotiations on the basis of these preconditions.

This means that the Israeli prime minister not only closes the door on the foundations of the peace process but also sets preconditions. According to Netanyahu's calculations, these preconditions pave the way for the acceptance by the other side of Netanyahu's peace concept, which is actually very far away from peace. This is because peace conflicts with occupation and with letting go of the Arab rights in the Golan, southern Lebanon, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and Arab Jerusalem.

Gentlemen: The Arab summit recently held in Cairo left the door open for achieving a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the land-for-peace principle, which has the support of the international community, particularly the two cosponsors of the peace process, as well as the EU and the seven industrialized states.

This summit also stressed that peace is the Arabs' strategic option because peace that ends occupation and secures rights will ensure equal peace for all sides and achieve stability in the region. The summit thus emphasized the Arab constants regarding peace. The responsibility of any party that is interested in peace, particularly the U.S. Administration, lies in adhering to the commitments in terms of extending help to achieve a just and comprehensive peace.

These commitments should not be influenced by U.S. electoral matters or anything that concerns vital U.S. interests in the region. Any defect in these commitments could create a situation that closes the door to peace and generates conflicts that could aggravate the state of affairs in the region as a result of the policies pursued by the extremist Israeli right wing. This right wing does not conceal its ambitions in terms of completing the implementation of its Torah project, whose only concern is to pursue the policy of force and aggression.

Syria: Arab, World Opposition to Israeli 'Antipeace' Policy

JN1407145696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1135 GMT 14 Jul 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners: Since the success of the extremist Israeli right wing in the recent Israeli elections, the Netanyahu-led feverish campaign against the peace process failed to make the Arabs and the world, quoting the Israeli prime minister, adapt to his policies. Rather, with the exception of the applause in the U.S. Congress, this campaign has drawn and is drawing Arab and international opposition, for it poses dangers going beyond the region to the international arena. After the tripartite Damascus summit, the Arabs held an Arab summit in Cairo to discuss recent regional developments and draft an Arab action plan to enhance Arab solidarity. They reiterated commitment to the pan-Arab constants on Arab rights in the peace process, which is a strategic Arab option. Meanwhile, the EU states, the Group of Seven, and many other countries did not hide their concern about the Netanyahu government's policy, which undermines the entire peace process because of Netanyahu's three no's to withdrawal from the Golan, to an independent Palestinian state, and to discussing the future of Jerusalem, which he deems as Israel's eternal capital.

Those influential international powers called for adherence to the bases of the peace process, the Madrid terms of reference, and the land-for-peace principle which the Netanyahu government has dropped and replaced with the security-for-peace slogan. According to the Israeli concept, this means the Arabs should be committed to Israel's security while maintaining and protecting its current occupation of Arab territories in return for the peace that it offers. For Israel, this peace means nothing

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but Israeli hegemony and dictates that eventually serve what Netanyahu defined as his government's mission of completing the implementation of the Zionist Torah project.

Dear listeners: When the extremist Israeli right-wing government was faced with Arab and international insistence on the bases of the peace process, it had no choice but to resort to maneuvers and claim that it did not give up peace. If Netanyahu can talk about his special concept of peace, then every party should have the right to present its own concept. Those and other statements reflect the state of confusion afflicting the new Israeli rulers, who imagine they can shirk the peace process and avoid commitment to its bases if they market the idea of reconsidering those bases. Their game is exposed and will fool no one because the peace process is based on the U.S. initiative, the Madrid terms of reference, and the land-for-peace principle. When the Netanyahu government shirks commitment to those bases, this means that it wants to avoid and undermine peace and push the region to a dangerous situation as a result of its policy which threatens to use force to impose its expansionist ambitions that seek to establish a Greater Israel inspired by its Torah illusions.

Consequently, the Israeli extremist right wing's policy runs contrary to peace, the will of the international community, and international legitimacy. This requires the international community and the Arabs in particular to work harder to make Israel give up its antipeace policy and abide by the bases of the peace process. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' stressed this yesterday when he said that the deliberations of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers in Muscat are a continuation of and a follow-up to the Cairo summit resolutions in order to revive the peace process and place it on the right track, which is based on the need to arrive at a comprehensive solution according to the UN Security Council resolutions and the land-for-peace principle.

Syria: Press Urges Arabs To Stop All Normalization With Israel

JN1307093796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its editorial, TISHRIN comments on the meeting that the foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration states will hold in Muscat today. The paper says the meeting is especially important since it is the first extensive Arab meeting to be held after the Cairo Arab summit and the Israeli prime minister's visit to the United States. In the presence of President Clinton, the paper says, Netanyahu was careful to declare his extremist and intransigent stands and to reiterate his famous no's to peace, both in form and content and as a framework and an objective.

TISHRIN adds: While Arab capitals have denounced the Israeli prime minister's statements and viewed them as a violation of the bases of the peace process and the Madrid formula, the Muscat meeting and its expected results will be of interest to all political circles, especially international ones. This is in view of the Israeli prime minister's allegation that the Arabs will eventually adapt themselves to his extremist stands and will submit to his policy aimed at annexing the occupied Arab territories and flooding them with new waves of settlers.

TISHRIN stresses that Arab capitals are aware of the seriousness of the new Israeli policy which aims to strengthen occupation and appropriate Palestinian land. The paper calls for solidifying the Arab position and promoting Arab solidarity to the desired level. It says: The strength of the Arabs lies in their unity. The strength of Israel lies in the Arabs' disunity and divisions. The Cairo summit laid a solid foundation for a unified Arab position. This position should be developed so as to rally genuine Arab support. With their strong friendships, the Arabs should also be able to rally international support. The more unified their positions are, the stronger international support the Arabs can rally for their issues and the greater the isolation of Israel and its rulers. The entire international community is looking forward to a just, comprehensive Middle East peace that ends the occupation and gives the Palestinians their rights. What Netanyahu promises is completely the opposite; he promises occupation, repression, violence, terrorism, wasting of rights, and undermining the very bases of the peace process.

TISHRIN concludes by saying: Hence, the Muscat meeting is an important step toward solidifying the Arab position and safeguarding pan-Arab destiny from Israel's hostile, expansionist schemes. It will place the international community, especially the cosponsors of the peace process, before their responsibilities.

In its editorial, AL-THAWRAH comments on Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's statements during his visit to the United States. It stresses that Netanyahu did not stop for one moment defying the United States and its initiative, recklessly demanding security in return for peace, thus annulling the U.S. initiative.

After refuting Netanyahu's statements, AL-THAWRAH calls on the U.S. Administration to respond to the statements he made in the heart of the United States. The paper says: The issue now involves the U.S. prestige itself. The United States should safeguard its credibility

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and global image against this challenge by forcing Israel to give up this political insanity and arrogance which, if not stopped, will push the region to the brink of collapse.

AL-THAWRAH says that the Arab summit gave Netanyahu sufficient opportunity to reconsider his political concepts and vision on the future of the peace process. The paper calls for a comprehensive Arab move to further close Arab ranks and arrive at a joint vision that could serve as a basis for joint action against this bloody ghoul which rejects everything and dreams of annihilating the Arabs and turning them into slaves in its mythical, imaginary kingdom.

AL-THAWRAH says the Arabs have a major, urgent pan-Arab mission which they should fulfill as fast as this man moves to apply his political concepts. The Arabs should quickly implement the summit resolutions, which are currently sufficient to halt this racist, rancorous current which is moving to sweep away everyone of them.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: As a first step, the Arabs should at least stop all instances of rushing toward Israel, normalization, and relations with Israel until Netanyahu yields to the international desire for peace, declares his commitment to the peace process according to the U.S. initiative and on the basis of the Madrid terms of conference, and gives up his three no's.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Commander Denies Differences With Party

LD1307185396 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Zardad Faryadi, commander of the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] mobile strike regiment, has rejected rumors regarding his differences with the party.

During an interview with PAMIR newspaper, Major General Zardad Faryadi said: We have no differences with the Hezb-e Eslami. We continue to the end to support the position of our party.

Fighters of the mobile strike regiment have proved their loyalty to the instructions of their party even in very difficult conditions.

During his interview, he said: Some elements are waiting to see if they can succeed in sowing discord among close friends and thus change their fraternal relations to hostility and disagreement.

At the end of his interview he said: The mobile strike regiment supports its party's position with sincerity and courage.

Afghanistan: Mas'ud Issues 'Strong Criticism' of Coalition Government

BK1507083596 Hong Kong AFP in English 0824 GMT 15 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KABUL, July 15 (AFP) — President Borhanoddin Rabbani's military supremo has publicly lambasted Afghanistan's new coalition premier for failing to seek approval for an array of controversial policy plans.

Ahmad Shah Mas'ud's strong criticism of new Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar's approach was the first public sign of internal differences in the fledgling interim government, observers said.

"Some of Mr. Hekmatyar's policies have not been submitted to the High State Council for approval," Mas'ud's spokesman, Amrullah, told journalists at a special press conference late Sunday [14 July].

"Had he done so we would certainly have rejected some of them. Some of what he has announced is more his own party policy than government policy, and we want to ensure that such policies should be submitted to the proper legislative body," he added.

The High State Council is a 10-person senior body that must ratify any government or cabinet decision of "extraordinary importance or significance" before it enters into law.

The move by Mas'ud, the military strongman of the newly expanded Kabul government, came after Hekmatyar — a former opposition leader — unveiled a range of new policies that appear aimed at tightening religious and legal controls in this war-torn Muslim state.

Hekmatyar has ordered all cinemas in battered Kabul shut down until they can show suitably Islamic films and has called for all music to be banned from radio and television stations, officials have said.

In addition, he has said civil servants should be sacked if they fail to stop work for prayers and that women cadres should be required to wear traditional Muslim dresses and veils.

Amrullah avoided specifying which of Hekmatyar's policies, announced in a series of speeches since he took office 20 days ago, had prompted Mas'ud's public dressing down.

He said Mas'ud, who belongs to President Borhanoddin Rabbani's Jam'iyat-e Eslami party, wanted to ensure that the government did not send out wrong signals to locals and foreign countries.

"We want people inside and outside the country who may be concerned by this to be aware that some of these policies are not our stand and that we are opposed to them," he said.

But he took pains to downplay any notion of a split in the five-party coalition government now headed by Hekmatyar, until recently an arch enemy of Rabbani's government.

"This should be no cause for confusion that there is a split in the government," he said.

"There is no confrontation in the government, but we would appreciate it if Mr. Hekmatyar consulted the High State Council over policy," he added.

Analysts here said the move to bring into the open differences between members of the coalition government could be a positive step towards proper political debate.

"At least the limits have now been set publicly, so everybody knows where they stand in relation to the other parties," one said.

"It could prove to be a healthy new start rather than a fragmentation of the alliance."

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Afghanistan: Kabul To Follow Iranian Prototype of Power Structure

LD1407184896 Tehran IRNA in English 1825 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, July 14, IRNA — The elected Afghan Government after the nationwide polling expects to eliminate the post of premiership by making use of Iranian experience in restructuring its executive branch which is led by the president, announced the Afghan Prime Minister, Golboddin Hekmatyar here Sunday [14 Jul].

Hekmatyar made this announcement at a ceremony marking the 28th anniversary of the martyrdom of allamah Seyed Esmail Balkhi in Kabul.

The newly designated prime minister added that the elected Afghan Government will specifically use the Iranian experience in defining the limits and jurisdiction of each power through referendum and franchise.

Hekmatyar added that since the political atmosphere has become favorable for holding a general election in the country, adding that all the parties and factions will have a share in the power and the administration of the country in proportion to the votes they obtain.

The Afghan prime minister and leader of the "Hezb-e Eslami" [Islamic Party] stressed that a powerful and united Afghanistan is the ideal of all the Mojahedin and over one and a half million martyrs of that country.

Hekmatyar indicated that many opportunities had been lost in the past for the creation of a strong and united Afghanistan. The premier believed in the share of power in the future government by all Jihadi parties giving an expression of reality to the aspirations of the martyrs.

He also announced that he was willing to accept legitimate and precise demands of the opposition, calling for the unification of all existing factions in Afghanistan for the establishment of an all-inclusive and powerful Islamic government.

Hekmatyar said that the goals of the current interim government in Afghanistan include a full campaign for serving people, ridding the society of oppression and ravages of war and paving the way for a referendum for the establishment of the Islamic government.

He pointed out that there existed stronger possibility for ending the war in that country today than in the past, expressing hope of the prevalence of a lasting nationwide peace immediately.

The Afghan prime minister criticized some factions for failing to join the peace process in that country, stating that they positively and automatically responded to the United States invitation to participate in a seminar sponsored by the U.S. Senate but outright rejected a call for a dialogue with the different Afghan factions.

He stressed that the interim cabinet was moving harmoniously and with unity of expression adding that all the ratifications were being carried out unanimously and all parties allied with the government called for the full observance of law in the country.

Leader of the Hezb-e Eslami praised the personality of allamah Balkhi, enjoining the present younger generation of Afghanistan to follow the footpath of the martyred Balkhi.

Afghanistan: Government Forces Recapture Northern District

LD1307152596 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 0315 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic State of Afghanistan [ISA] has extended the hand of friendship to all opposition forces and wishes to resolve all issues by talks. In reply to peace calls, the opposition forces still use force. For example, on 11 July the opposition forces began combat operations against Balkhab District. The ISA force embarked on a broad counterattack in response to the enemy attack. As a result, the forces of the 26th Division, Jowzjan Province; 366th regiment; and the local Mojahedin in Balkhab recaptured the district. The government opposition forces were pushed back 15 km from the district. In the course of this successful counterattack, 20 members of the opposition forces, along with their weapons, were taken alive by government forces. Three light machine guns, a heavy weapon ammunition depot, and a R-140 type communication set were seized by the Mojahedin.

The report adds that the units and companies of the 26th Division, under the command of Mohammad Hakim, and the 366th Regiment, under the command of Mohammad Nabi Sarwari, have taken part in a coordinated advance in two directions.

Afghanistan: Nangarhar Officials Deny Usamah Bin-Ladin in Afghanistan

JN1307072496 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD AL-USBU'I in Arabic 11 Jul 96

[Report by Ahmad Barakat in Peshawar; all Afghan names as transliterated; received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] Afghan and Pakistani sources denied reports that pointed to the presence of businessman Usamah Bin-Ladin in the state of Nangarhar in Afghanistan, and considered them as untrue, including

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the interview with Bin-Ladin which was published in the British INDEPENDENT newspaper yesterday.

Based on Pakistani intelligence information, these reports claimed that Usamah Bin-Ladin arrived at Jalalabad airport late June aboard a C-130 plane which carried no distinctive marks to show its identity. According to the reports, several families wearing Arab clothes disembarked from the plane, and they all immediately moved to an unknown destination, accompanied by elements from the Islamic Party led by Golboddin Hekmatyar.

Bin-Ladin, 44, left Afghanistan for Sudan approximately three years ago. However, he had to leave Khartoum after international pressures escalated against the Sudanese Government in the wake of the failed attempt to assassinate Egyptian President Husni Mubarak last year.

A source, who requested anonymity, attributed Bin-Ladin's departure from Sudan to his feeling of danger following several attempts to assassinate him, the latest of which was carried out by one of his bodyguards.

In a statement to AL-ITTIHAD AL-USBU'I, Haji 'Abd-al-Qadir, head of the Consultative Council in the state of Nangarhar, and al-Mawlawi 'Abd-al-Haqq, member of the Consultative Council, categorically denied that Bin-Ladin arrived in Nangarhar or that he is in Afghanistan. An official in the Islamic Unity, which is led by 'Abd-Rabb-al-Rasul, and the spokesman for the Islamic Party, led by Hekmatyar, denied any knowledge of Bin-Ladin's arrival in Afghanistan.

A prominent Pakistani intelligence official cast doubt on the INDEPENDENT interview. He said an Algerian national called Abu-Rashid [not further identified] posed as Bin-Ladin and gave the interview. Another source at the Crime Fighting Unit in Peshawar said that Bin-Ladin is presently residing with approximately 150 Arabs at an Islamic Party center near Sad Naghlu, west of Jalalabad. A prominent Pakistani journalist cited a senior Pakistani official as saying that Pakistan is subjected to U.S. pressures to compile detailed information on Bin-Ladin and his whereabouts.

The press source wondered about the objective behind this interview, and the choice of the INDEPENDENT newspaper, knowing that Bin-Ladin is aware of his critical situation. The source, however, explained the interview by saying that Bin-Ladin sought to acquit Sudan and conceal his permanent residence. Diplomatic sources did not rule out that Bin-Ladin left Afghanistan for another place immediately after the interview.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: New Parliament Session Opens Amid National Party Walkout

BK1407140896 Hong Kong AFP in English 1359 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, July 14 (AFP) — The maiden session of Bangladesh's new parliament opened Sunday, with the Awami League's formal return to power after 21 years marred by a one-hour walkout by the main opposition party.

A confident Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed took the chair as leader in the green-carpeted house chamber as cameras clicked to mark the historic moment.

Wajed's party resumed power for the first time since its ouster in a bloody 1975 military coup. Sheikh Hasina's father and Bangladesh's founding leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was killed along with most of his family members in the putsch.

"I again pledge to make the parliament a focal point for all national activity and seek constructive cooperation from the opposition," she said in brief remarks.

The BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] — the largest single opposition party in the history of Bangladesh's parliament — staged a walkout soon after the session started, prompted by the refusal of the outgoing speaker, BNP MP [member of parliament] Sheikh Razzak Ali, to give the floor to Badruiddoza Chowdhury, the deputy opposition leader.

"You are not allowing us to speak, and if you do not we will be forced to stage a walkout," BNP chief Khaleda Zia shouted before leading her deputies out of the house. They returned after a one-hour break.

Chowdhury told reporters that the BNP wanted the floor to protest the placing of Rahman's picture in the parliament without former speaker Ali's permission, an act he called a breach of privilege.

The party also wanted to denounce the June 12 elections that brought Sheikh Hasina to power as fixed.

Sheikh Hasina said the walkout was "unfortunate" and "pre-planned."

"It was not timely and befitting for the BNP to take such action," she said.

Later, BNP lawmaker Obaidur Rahman told the house the June 12 general elections that brought Sheikh Hasina to power were "rigged."

International election monitors have rejected such claims by the BNP, assessing last month's polling as "free and fair."

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During the noisy first session, former Foreign Minister Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury was elected as the parliament's new speaker, and Abdul Hamid became the deputy speaker.

Former president and opposition Jatiya Party (JP) chief Hussain Muhammad Ershad and his wife, Raushan Ershad, were also present in the parliament for the first time.

Ershad, paroled Sunday for the session, was in high spirits as he greeted other politicians.

"I am very happy to join the new parliament ... everyone should work to fulfill the aspirations of the people," he told reporters during a break.

He had been jailed since 1991 for graft and a dozen other similar charges. His jailing prevented him from joining the parliament after being elected an MP for the first time in 1991. His wife was elected for the first time in last month's polls.

During the day, the house debated Sheikh Hasina's "government of national consensus," which includes JP and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal MPs as cabinet members. The BNP called it a "coalition government" although the ruling party has an outright majority in parliament.

The 330-member parliament started amid tension over the customary opening speech by the president.

Though the prime minister's office considered it constitutionally mandatory that he refer to Mujibur Rahman in the speech as "father of the nation and Bangabandhu," government sources said Biswas, a BNP leader was reluctant to comply.

He was yet to deliver the speech.

Mujibur Rahman led Bangladesh to its independence in 1971 from Pakistan and was popularly called "Bangabandhu" (friend of Bengal).

Months before his assassination, Mujibur Rahman's status as "father of the nation and Bangabandhu" were enshrined in the constitution, but the provision has remained "suspended" since then, according to legal analysts.

Bangladesh: Dhaka Reports on First Session of New Parliament

BK1407165196 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1600 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The first session of the newly elected parliament began this afternoon with outgoing speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali in the chair. Immediately after recitation from the holy Koran, the house elected [words indistinct] Humayun Rashid Chowdhury as the new speaker and Advocate Abdul Hamid as the deputy speaker. The chief whip of the treasury bench Abul Hasanat Abdullah proposed the names of both the speaker and deputy speaker. The first proposal was presented by [Name indistinct], while the second proposal was presented by Professor Rafiqul Islam, both from treasury (?bench).

Earlier, the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] members led by Leader of Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia staged a walkout in protest against disallowing an adjournment motion raised by Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury. The [word indistinct] of Mr. Chowdhury was supported by the leader and deputy leader of the opposition. The leader of the house, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, then took the floor and supported the stand of the chair. She expressed the hope that the members of the opposition will rise to the occasion and [words indistinct] constructive role as expected by the people. [passage omitted]

The felicitation of the new speaker was (?winded) up by the leader of the house, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. In her [words indistinct] speech, Sheikh Hasina expressed confidence and hoped that the new parliament will usher in a new era of hope for the people. She said in running the affairs of the country the treasury bench as well as opposition must [words indistinct]. Sheikh Hasina said that [words indistinct] from the opposition.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas administered the oath of office to the newly elected speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury and the deputy speaker Abdul Hamid at the president's chamber in the Sangsad Bhaban [parliament house] today. [passage omitted]

President Abdur Rahman Biswas was addressing the house when last reports came in.

Bangladesh: Hasina Calls Saudi Arabia Visit 'Very Fruitful'

BK1207163696 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Saudi Arabia assured it will extend all kinds of assistance and cooperation to Bangladesh to build infrastructure, with a view to augmenting the country's development. This was stated by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina upon her return to the country after a four-day visit to Saudi Arabia. Talking to journalists at Zia International Airport's VVIP [Very Very Important Person] lounge, the prime minister said that she held talks with King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Saud on various bilateral issues on 10 July. Sheikh Hasina disclosed that Saudi Arabia agreed to recruit more engineers and doctors from Bangladesh in addition to hiring skilled and unskilled manpower. The

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prime minister described her visit to Saudi Arabia as very fruitful.

Sheikh Hasina again called upon all political parties to cooperate with her government in curbing terrorism and violence in the interest of development. She said her government is bound to formulate all its national policies on the basis of national consensus. She expressed the hope that all political parties will play a positive role in the upcoming parliament session in the interest of national development. Sheikh Hasina made a fervent appeal to the opposition parties to forge a consensus on various national questions.

The prime minister said that during her stopover in Karachi, she held talks with some ministers and the city's governor. She also sent a message of good wishes to Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Local Government and Rural Development Minister Zillur Rahman, Finance Minister S.A.M.S. Kibria, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed, and the chiefs of three services received the prime minister at Zia International Airport in Dhaka.

India

India: 'Highly Placed' Kashmir Sources Report Hostages Still Alive

BK1507114396 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 15 Jul 96 p 7

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] While mystery surrounds the whereabouts of four Western tourists, held hostages by a militant outfit in Kashmir Valley for more than a year now, the Jammu & Kashmir Government believes that all the captives are alive.

Highly placed official sources, who refused to be quoted, said that they have failed to come across any evidence to substantiate the killing of the hostages, ever since the captors stopped contact with the State Government in November last.

"We still believe that there is every possibility of their being alive in the custody of militants," sources added.

Six Western tourists were kidnapped by "Al-Faran" from Pahalgam area of Anantnag district in Kashmir Valley in July last year to force the State Government into releasing some hardcore militants lodged in the jails.

John Childs of United States, one of the hostages, managed to escape and was rescued from a hilltop by some senior government functionaries, who noticed him while doing an aerial reconnaissance of the area on July 9.

Another hostage, Hans Christian Ostro of Norway, was beheaded by militants and his body was found near Aishmuqam.

Pointing out that efforts were still on to trace the hostages, sources said that militants have been shifting from one place to another along with the hostages.

Militants are believed to be hiding in the higher reaches between Anantnag district of Kashmir Valley and the adjoining Doda district of Jammu region.

However, the State Government has been avoiding any armed confrontation with the militants so as not to endanger the lives of the hostages. The Government was waiting for the militants to release the tourists themselves, sources added.

The kidnapping and subsequent killing of one of the hostages has evoked widespread condemnation across the world.

India: Gujral—CTBT Not in Nation's 'National Security' Interest

BK1207143396 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 12 Jul 96 p 7

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has made it clear that the draft Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was not in the interest of national security and therefore, it cannot subscribe to the treaty in its present form, external affairs minister I K Gujral said in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday [11 July].

In a written reply, Mr Gujral said India had also made it clear that the draft CTBT text was not a measure towards universal nuclear disarmament. He also informed that during the course of the Geneva negotiations, India had introduced proposals to make it an integral part of global nuclear disarmament.

ARMS: The government is determined to take all necessary measures to counter the adverse effect on India's security, following the transfer of $368 million of sophisticated arms to Pakistan by the US.

In a written reply, Mr Gujral said the actual transfer of the equipment through a one time waiver of the Pressler Amendment was reported to have now started.

MISSILES: The government on Thursday admitted that it was aware of the deployment of Chinese M-11 nuclear missiles by Pakistan. Mr Gujral told Mr Janardhana Poojary in a written reply. He reiterated that the

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government was committed to taking all necessary steps for safeguarding the country's security and national interest.

PURULIA: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is in the process of collecting corroborative evidence of direct/circumstantial nature and pertaining to financial transactions from foreign countries through Interpol and letter rogatory on the Purulia arms dropping incident.

A chargesheet was filed by the CBI against 13 persons on March 20 in the case, home minister Indrajit Gupta told Mr M A Baby in a written answer.

POSTS: The government has undertaken a ten-point programme to improve the postal services, particularly the dispatch and delivery of mail and money orders.

Replying to supplementaries during Question Hour on Thursday, minister for communications Beni Prasad Verma, said while in general, mails were delivered as per norms, instances of delays do occur. He said although the dispatch and delivery services were satisfactory in general, the postal department has taken various steps to improve them.

FLOODS: As many as 641 people were killed and 13,540 animals perished in the recent floods in various states.

The Centre has released over Rs [rupees] 348 crore [one crore is equal to 10 million] towards its share of the calamity relief funds to the affected states, minister of agriculture Chaturnanan Mishra told H Hanumanthappa in a written reply.

CAUVERY: The Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal has so far held 90 hearings since its inception in June 2, 1990. It had passed an interim award on June 25, 1991 directing the Karnataka government to ensure inflows of 205,000 million cubic feet (tmc ft) of water into the mettur reservoir of Tamil Nadu for each water year (June to May) with monthly and weekly stipulations, minister of water resources Janeshwar Mishra told H Hanumanthappa in a written reply.

FOREIGN TV: The government has not agreed to grant permission for uplinking facilities to foreign television networks the Lok Sabha was informed on Thursday.

India: Russia Proposes Talks 'To Persuade' India To Sign CTBT

BK1207145296 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 12 Jul 96 p 4

[Report by Jyoti Malhotra]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Russia has offered to hold talks with India to persuade it to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) as pressure mounts once again on New Delhi to fall in line.

High-ranking Russian officials met senior officials in the external affairs ministry here yesterday, offering consultations between the two countries either in New Delhi or in Moscow before the conference on disarmament reconvenes in Geneva on July 29.

The Russian offer to hold talks comes three weeks after Moscow sent a demarche to the ministry here, saying that India should sign the CTBT.

New Delhi has so far refused to sign, saying the treaty does not address its concerns on eliminating nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework.

Russian officials told the BUSINESS STANDARD that they personally favoured a revised draft treaty that only calls upon the five nuclear weapons states (P-5) to sign.

Other nuclear threshold states like India, Pakistan and Israel could accede to the CTBT whenever they wanted to.

But, they added, "it was necessary to get India out of the cul-de-sac" it was in right now and that is why they wanted "to find a compromise solution".

The Russian officials said India was "perfectly justified" in creating a linkage between nuclear disarmament and a time-bound framework, but that it was now New Delhi's responsibility to "move to the next step."

For example, Russia and India could jointly come together and issue a statement to the P-5 in Geneva, which offered such a detailed timetable to eliminate nuclear weapons.

Alternatively, the P-5 could be asked by Moscow and New Delhi to issue "a non-binding pledge, a declaration, a statement of intention" to eliminate nuclear weapons.

Or, an ad hoc committee could be set up within the conference on disarmament with a specific mandate to provide a timetable to eliminate nuclear weapons by next year (when India wants a special UN session on disarmament to be called).

The Russian officials said: "If India is not satisfied by such a non-binding pledge, then it can walk out of the treaty. But if you don't sign the current draft, then the CTBT will be killed. We don't want the CTBT to the killed. "Asked what would happen if India refused to sign on the grounds that a non-binding declaration was "too vague", the Russian officials said, "better not be a torpedo tube. People will then be talking about India for ages".

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The Russian keenness to engage India in talks, strategic analysts said, seemed to be an attempt to "tie New Delhi down" so that it does not block the CTBT. As things now stand, India is part of a list of countries who must sign if the treaty is to go into effect. If India does not sign, the treaty will be wrecked.

The analysts said it seemed as if Russia's positions had become more flexible vis-a-vis India, but that Moscow probably wanted a commitment from New Delhi "not to block the CTBT". "We, in Russia, realise that the important thing is not to close the door on India," the Russian officials added, "so let us together persuade the other nuclear powers to issue a common pledge".

India: Official Warns of 'Plenty of Heat' Over CTBT

BK1307105296 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 13 Jul 96 pp 1, 9

[Report by Chidanand Rajghatta from Washinton]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The United States has made a demarche to India asking it not to block the nuclear test ban treaty which has been virtually finalised in Geneva. The Indian Government is expected to respond to it in Parliament on Monday [8 July].

The demarche, a sort of government-to-government diplomatic firman [as published], was conveyed to the Indian government by the US ambassador in New Delhi, Frank Wisner, sources said.

Asking India to go along with the current draft of the CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] and not seek any changes, the demarche indicates the increased American desperation and the pressure it is beginning to apply against what it sees as a recalcitrant India.

The Indian ambassador in Washington, Naresh Chandra, met the Director of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, John Holum, on Tuesday [9 July], and as expected there was plenty of fur flying between two otherwise equable men.

But the real crunch could come when External Affairs Minister I.K. Gujral runs into Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the ASEAN meeting in Djakarta on July 23, a few days before the Conference on Disarmament session in Geneva.

One thing is certain. The US is staking a lot on this treaty and there is going to be plenty of heat, an official warned.

Under the new terms worked out to bring the treaty into force 44 countries, including India, need to ratify the treaty within three years.

If after three years of the treaty being opened for signature, there happen to be states among these 44 who haven't deposited their instruments of ratification, then by a vote of two-thirds, a conference can be called.

This conference would decide through a consensus what means consistent with international law could be adopted to accelerate the ratification process to facilitate an early entry into force of this treaty.

New Delhi, which has said it will not sign the treaty unless its concerns about complete and time-bound nuclear disarmament are met, is said to be shocked by the new language.

Analysts say the language in the proposed pact is unprecedented in any arms control treaty. Indian diplomats see the reference to international law as a threat of sanctions.

India has been insisting that it be dropped from the list of countries which need to sign the test ban treaty for it to come into force. The US — though reluctantly — was willing to do this. But now Washington says this is not possible because China, Russia, Britain and Pakistan won't sign the treaty if India does not.

"We are asking to be left out of the treaty, but the US is not willing because they say that others will escape too. We are being made scapegoats for an imperfect treaty," an Indian diplomat complained.

Forcibly empowered with a veto power, New Delhi can simply wreck the treaty by seeking changes in the treaty document now in circulation. This is where the US is turning the screws on India. The latest US demarche virtually warns India not to seek changes in the treaty.

In other words, the country is being asked to be quiet and let the treaty pass. If it goes through at Geneva when the CD resumes its sitting on July 29, it will be transmitted to New York to the UN General Assembly where it will be open for signature in September.

Indian diplomats say if New Delhi allows it to pass in its present form, it will have to face up to signing it — now or at the end of three years — failing which it could possibly face the threat of sanctions at worse and international opprobrium at best.

Every which way, New Delhi looks set to being branded a spoiler.

It feels the US is completely unsympathetic to India's security considerations and for the first time there is evidence of tension and discord in the dialogue over CTBT.

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In fact, an Indian diplomat was riled when a US interlocutor actually said India did not face any security threat.

"That would have been correct if we had Canada and Mexico as neighbours, not China and Pakistan," he fumed.

Indian officials also told their American counterparts that India cannot sign the treaty when the bonafides of the other principle signatories are suspect.

India: Court Rejects Petition To Issue Arrest Warrant Against Rao

BK1507103396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 15 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Delhi High Court has dismissed a petition seeking the issue of a nonbailable arrest warrant to the former prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, in the Lakhubhai Pathak case. Dismissing the revised public interest petition filed by Mr. Shyam Sundar Sharma, Mr. Justice N.G. Nandi, observed that the lower court has already issued summons to Mr. Rao in the case. The court said the chief metropolitan magistrate, CMM, has the full discretion to decide on whether to serve summons or issue a nonbailable warrant. The petitioner contended during the 45-minute hearing that while Chandraswami has been issued a nonbailable warrant, Mr. Rao is being allowed to remain free in the same case.

As reported, Mr. Rao has been summoned to CMM's court as a coaccused on the 24th of this month.

India: Congress Secretary Denies Demand for Rao's Resignation

BK1207130796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Congress Working Committee is meeting this evening, as scheduled, to discuss the situation arising out of the summoning of the party president, Mr. Narasimha Rao, in the Lakhubhai Pathak case. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, today denied rumors of postponement of the meeting. He termed as false reports that some leaders are collecting signatures demanding that Mr. Rao step down. Replying to a question, Mr. Gadgil said an appeal against the Delhi Court summons will be filed next week.

Meanwhile, the executive committee of the Congress Parliamentary Party [CPP] had an informal meeting this afternoon to discuss the situation. The CPP secretary told newspersons that the members generally showed their solidarity with the party president. He denied that there was a demand for Mr. Rao to step down nor was any resolution moved.

India: Government Crisis, Congress Party Threatens Withdrawal

BK1407170496 Hong Kong AFP in English 1643 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, July 14 (AFP) — The coalition government of Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda hurtled towards a crisis Sunday [14 July] when the Congress-I party, whose backing is crucial for its survival, threatened to withdraw support. "The ruling United Front should not take our support for granted, said Gadgil, spokesman of the Congress (I) party [no closing quotation marks as published].

Gadgil's comments came a day after a senior minister in Deve Gowda's cabinet said that it was impossible for the president of the Congress (I) party and former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to continue as the party leader.

Rao has been facing a simmering rebellion in the party since leading the Congress-I to its worst-ever performance in the April-May general elections. Pressure on Rao to step aside has increased since he was named July 9 in a fraud case.

Indrajit Gupta, a leader of the Communist Party of India and the minister for Home Affairs in the fragile coalition government, also said that a change in the leadership of the Congress (I) party would not affect the government.

"By asserting that Congress-I has no other option but to support the United Front government, Gupta is forcing us to review the support to the government," Gadgil told journalists here.

The Congress (I), while not a member of the coalition government, has agreed not to vote against the United Front government in parliament.

Businessman Lekhubhai Pathak has accused the then Foreign Minister Rao and a controversial Hindu mystic, Chandraswami, of cheating him out of 100,000 dollars in 1983 by promising a contract that never materialised.

The case is scheduled for a court hearing here on July 24. Both Rao and the Hindu guru have denied charges, saying that they were framed by their political opponents.

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India: Home Minister Denies Case Against Rao Threat to Government

BK1407093196 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The home minister, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, says there is no threat to the United Front [UF] government even if the Congress president, Mr. Narasimha Rao, is found guilty and punished in the Lakhubhai Pathak case. Talking to newspersons soon after arriving in Madras today, he said the Congress had no other option but to continue its support to the UF ministry. Mr. Gupta said if the Congress withdraws its support and forces fresh Lok Sabha elections it will be totally wiped out.

Asked whether the center would pursue the Pathak case seriously as it might lead to the Congress withdrawing its support to the ministry, Mr. Gupta said if Mr. Rao was found guilty, he would be punished just like anybody else. He assured that the Pathak case would not come in the way of Congress support to the UF.

Later, inaugurating the All India UCO [United Commercial] Bank Federation, the home minister said that the center might reduce the price of cooking gas and an announcement to this effect will be made in a few days. Mr. Indrajit Gupta has, however, defended the hike in petroleum prices saying it was inevitable as the country's oil pool reserves would have come to nil had it not been done.

India: Gowda 'Unhappy' Over Minister's Remarks Against Congress

BK1507034596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 15 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister says the ongoing debate in the Indian National Congress is purely an internal affair of that party. Sources close to Mr. Deve Gowda said in New Delhi last evening that the prime minister was unhappy that the union home minister should have expressed publicly his views on the internal affairs of a part supporting the government from outside. Mr. Deve Gowda is expected to convey his unhappiness on this to his colleagues and advise them not to air their views and comments on the internal affairs of United Front partners or parties supporting the government from outside since all of them have joined against nonsecular forces.

As reported, the Congress has expressed resentment over the remarks of the home minister, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, in Madras on Saturday [13 July] about the party and its president Mr. Narasimha Rao. In a statement issued in New Delhi yesterday, the Congress general secretary, Mr. Janardhana Poojary, said it is none of Mr. Gupta's business to meddle with the internal affairs of his party. Mr. Poojary said the home minister has crossed the limit when he commented that the Congress will be wiped out if it withdraws support to the United Front government. Several other senior leaders of the party have also reacted sharply to Mr. Gupta's remarks.

The Congress president, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, is to go in for an appeal in the Delhi High Court in a day or two against the metropolitan magistrate's order, which summoned him as the coaccused in the Lakhubhai Pathak cheating case. According to the Legal Cell chairman of the All India Congress Committee, Mr. O.P. Sharma, the appeal is being prepared.

India: Congress Party Says Home Minister's Remarks 'Irresponsible'

BK1407162196 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Congress [party] has expressed resentment over the remarks of the home minister, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, in Madras yesterday about the party and its president, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao.

In a statement issued in New Delhi today, the Congress general secretary, Mr. Janardhan Poojary, said it is none of Mr. Gupta's business to meddle with the internal affairs of his party. He said the home minister has crossed the limit when he said that the Congress will be wiped out if it withdraws support to the United Front government.

Another party general secretary, Mr. Devendranath Dwevedi, in a press release said that Mr. Gupta's comments can cause strain on the relationship between the Congress party and the United Front government. He termed Mr. Gupta's remarks as irresponsible.

The former home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, in his reaction said that the Congress extended support to the United Front government out of certain conviction and not due to any compulsion. Mr. Chavan said this should be properly understood.

A senior Congress Working Committee member, Mr. A.K. Anthony, said that his party will put forward certain norms for the support being given to the United front at the center. Talking to newsmen in Thiruvananthpuram this evening, he said that the next working committee meeting is to discuss the modalities of these norms. Mr. Anthony expressed the hope that the internal problems of the party will be decided soon.

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Iran

Iran: Velayati Expresses Optimism for Iran-Turkey Relations

LD1207151696 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 10 Jul 96 p 1, 13

[Unattributed report: "Velayati Optimistic That Iran's Ties With Erbakan's Turkey Will Improve"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati expressed 'optimism' about Iran-Turkish ties and said with the advent of an Islamic government in Ankara 'it is expected that Turkish relations with the Islamic countries will improve'.

In an interview with IRAN NEWS, Velayati yesterday said, "Turkey's relations with Islamic countries and its neighbours will improve after a change in the government in Ankara.

He was referring to Turkey's Islamist Welfare Party headed by Necmettin Erbakan who became prime minister on June 28 in coalition deal with True Path Party led by Tansu Ciller. He also won a vote of confidence from Turkish parliament on Monday [8 July].

After a meeting with visiting Turkish Deputy Interior Minister, Erol Chaker, Velayati said, "Mr Erbakan has adopted a friendly attitude towards Iran and we hope for a better and more constructive future for Tehran-Ankara ties." He disclosed that a military delegation from Turkey is due to arrive here on a fact-finding mission.

"Military experts from Turkey along with their counterparts in Iran will go to the common Iran-Turkish border to investigate the border incident which occurred on June 26," Velayati said. A total of six Iranian civilians were killed and 15 were injured during what is believed to have been a Turkish Air Force helicopter attack.

"We expect from the Turkish government that such an incident should not be repeated in the future," Velayati said.

Velayati yesterday met with Turkish Deputy Interior Minister and exchanged views with him on the two countries' security issues.

We lodged a complaint with Turkey for the border incident that Ankara denies any involvement in, he said.

Velayati said, "Turkey accepted the Iranian proposal for dispatching an expert delegation for the investigation of the border incident".

The foreign minister said, "Turkey says it wants to have friendly and cordial relations with Iran and its government insists that it had no role in whatever happened on the border."

Officials of the two countries will continue their contacts on border issues so that peace may be maintained on the borders, Velayati said.

Iran always wants to have good relations with Turkey and "We told the Turkish officials to be careful so that such incidents may not be repeated in the future," Velayati said.

It is the core of our policy to keep our borders intact and protect our citizens," Velayati concluded.

Iran: No Official Complaint Filed With Turkey Over Air Incident

LD1207123896 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0850 GMT 12 Jul 96

[From the "Weekly Review" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified announcer] As you are aware, following an air attack by Turkish Army aircraft on a border village in our country the matter was discussed by the two countries' officials at a committee in Tehran this week. We interviewed Mr. [Gholam Hoseyn] Bolandian, the deputy interior minister for security affairs, and asked him about the outcome of the discussions. Mr Bolandian please go ahead.

[Bolandian] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The commission was held on Saturday [6 July]. A senior Turkish delegation, headed by the Turkish deputy interior minister, arrived in Iran and we held discussions with the gentlemen. First they were saying that the Turkish Army does not accept that such an attack has taken place and that it does not accept Iran's claim. But during two rounds of very intensive and heavy discussions with the Turkish delegation and after a number of meetings between the Turkish delegation and our country's senior officials, they were made to understand that such an incident had taken place and that they had to accept it. We offered them evidence and documents, including empty rocket shells found in the region [video shows pictures of shells], which prove that they were fired by Turkish Army helicopters. They received the documents and accepted the case. They further announced that they did not reject that such an act of aggression had taken place. They said that they would take the documents to Ankara.

We also demanded that a technical delegation should be dispatched immediately to study the exact border spot where the incident took place. Fortunately they accepted this and it was decided that a technical delegation will be formed as soon as possible. We also demanded that a political delegation should also be dispatched from Ankara to come and console the families of those martyred or injured [during the attack], assess the

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damage, and take action on the payment of damages. The Turkish delegation also agreed to raise this in Ankara and follow it up. We hope that this will also take place, God willing.

[Announcer] Mr. Bolandian, is the Islamic Republic of Iran going to pursue the case by taking it to international forums, taking any other particular action?

[Bolandian] We think that following our discussions at the joint supreme security committee with the Turkish delegation during which we offered them documents on the incident, the signing of the memorandum of understanding in this respect and their promise to follow up the case seriously, there will be no need to raise the matter at international forums. We are two neighboring countries and are able to resolve our problems ourselves by holding talks and stopping such problems from occurring in the future.

[Announcer] Thank you Mr. Bolandian.

Iran: Turkey Practicing 'Double Standards' on Border Issues

LD1207204796 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 9 Jul 96 , p14

[Commentary written by Maryam Mahdavi: "Don't Let Turkey Waste Time"]

[FBIS Translated Text] After many days of delay, eventually the Turkish deputy interior minister announced yesterday that the Turkish army has investigated a recent attack by Turkish army helicopters against Iranian territory, and that his country still does not accept that the aggression took place. This Turkish official added: The Turkish government has accepted a Turkish air attack against Iranian territory during 1372 [year beginning 21st March 1993] and it is prepared to pay compensation for any financial or psychological damage.

Last week, after an attack on the border region of Selvana in Orumiyeh by Turkish army helicopters, it was decided that a senior Turkish delegation should come to Tehran to give an explanation, make an official apology, and make reparations. Now that the Turkish delegation has come to Tehran, it has been said that the incident is being investigated and that they are prepared to pay compensation for the attack in 1372! It seems that Turkish policymakers have omitted the effective element of time from their decision-making. Since all they have seen from the Islamic Republic so far has been patience, composure and self-restraint, they have concluded that they can defer any explanations to three years hence!

During the 1372 incident, Turkey, embarking on some telephone diplomacy, swiftly accepted responsibility for the attacking helicopters and promised reparations. Now, after the lapse of three years, it has come to the point and is ready to pay reparations for the 1372 incident. However, now that it is denying any responsibility in the recent incident, heaven only knows when this is going to be deferred to.

The Iranian nation's logical and rational expectations are: explicit and unambiguous response by the Turkish authorities, compensation for the losses; and undertaking that such incidents will not recur. Turkey must resolve the double standards in its internal policies domestically and in its foreign policy and approach to its neighbors it must reach a unified view. There is a limit to Iran's self-restraint in the face of the contradictory foreign policies of that government. Just as our authorities have announced, Iran is not ready to turn a blind eye to issues concerning its borders and the rights of its citizens. It seems that while Turkey is on the threshold of forming a new government, it must undertake a radical review of its relations with its neighbours and by eliminating tension in those relations, pave the way for the expansion of bilateral ties with its neighbours. Turkey must realize that a resolution of its domestic problems is not dependent on creating tension in its relations with its neighboring countries. Good-neighborliness is the first requirement for international relations. Turkey, which has paid a heavy price for getting close to the EU and the Zionist regime, surely realizes what the consequences of its isolation in the region will be.

Iran: Paper Comments on Turkey's 'Islamist' Government

LD1207171496 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 10 Jul 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Erbakan's Action"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of an Islamic party, the Welfare Party, has formed the first Islamist government of the Turkish republic.

A party that entered the arena of Turkish political struggles 80 years ago is now standing alongside other parties and is exercising a direct and effective participation in the Turkish political power structure. Without a doubt, this success is rooted in the Islamic identity of Turkey, and despite many years of intense campaign against this religious identity, the citizens of that country, in particular its youth, have a completely different outlook toward Islam.

Following a coalition with Ciller's extremely Western-oriented and secular True Path Party, Erbakan's government has been formed under one of the most sensitive conditions that has ever existed both in Turkey and in the region as whole.

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The future of this cabinet depends more on the outcome of international political equations, especially in the region, and the role of Turkey therein, than on the new government's success or failure on the domestic scene. After all, Turkey did accept a certain role during the Cold War era and decided to tie its economic survival to this role.

Right now, Erbakan should either continue the past foreign policies or retreat from some, or even the majority, of them.

Amid all this, in addition to the factor of coalition with the True Path Party, two other factors will play a crucial role: First, [Suleyman] Demirel's role as the president, and second, the role of the Turkish army and its quest for power.

Both these two factors can effectively determine the direction of Turkey's foreign policy, and if necessary, both the army and the president will not hesitate to resort to force.

If Erbakan wants to go further than merely engaging in political maneuvers and if he is seriously interested in altering the diplomatic characteristics of his country, then he should be prepared to face the threat of possible forthcoming votes of no-confidence, followed perhaps by the army's intervention under the pretext of preventing threats to the country's national interests.

In addition, the main factor which brings Turkey close to the Middle Eastern countries, especially the Arab states, is the regional role of Tel Aviv as well as the vitally important dispute over water resources.

In view of the present circumstances facing Turkey, Erbakan's coalition government needs action and dynamism more than mere political maneuvers, so as to be able to return to the folds of Islamic states.

Iran: Iraqi Kurd Warns Turkey To Halt Military Operations

LD1207140596 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 9 Jul 96 p 1

[Article By Mojgan Tavassoli: "RHIK Will Fight if Turkey's Military Operations Continue, Barzani"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — Iran can play a key role in bringing peace to the warring Kurdish parties in Iraq's Kurdistan province, a senior Kurdish leader said here yesterday.

Shaykh Adham Barzani, Leader of Revolutionary Hezbollah of Iraqi Kurdistan (RHIK), told IRAN NEWS that no country could better influence the politics of Iraq's Kurdistan than the Islamic Republic, but regretfully whenever Iran's efforts are about to bear fruit the U.S. and Western nations interfere and neutralize them.

He said it is a fact that Iran's efforts will lead to peace in that area.

"The different Kurdish factions in Northern Iraq listen to Iran and value Iran's mediation role in that region," Barzani noted.

Concerning the escalation of skirmishes between Kurdistan Democrat Party (KDP) led by Jallal Talebani, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) led by Mas'ud Barzani, the RHIK leader anticipated that such struggles would be further intensified in the coming days.

"But it seems that one of these parties must eliminate the other in order to survive and assume power, and this is the only solution for their problem," said Barzani.

He said the so-called peace efforts launched by the two warring parties were only pretensions for peace, but the fact is that they have other objectives in mind.

Barzani said the continued conflict between these two parties has damaged their reputations among the people.

"Instead of spending their money to buy arms to make war, these two parties could help the Kurdish people economically to improve their relations with each other as well as with the Kurdish people," the RHIK leader pointed out.

With regard to the recent invasion of Northern Iraq by the Turkish army, Barzani said: "We have said time and again that we condemn any move against the Kurdish nation in Northern Iraq by Turkey, and should Turkey continue its military operations in the future we will face them with arms."

A large number of the Kurdish population in Turkish Kurdistan have taken refuge at the Dahuk province in Iraq and have built camps for themselves, but due to pressures exerted by the Turkish government they are in a critical condition and their camps have been recently bombarded by the Turks.

"Meanwhile, the military agreement between Turkey and Israel has been instrumental in the recent Turkish military adventurism, and by signing that pact Turkey has in fact taken a step against Islamic movements in the region. But now that Erbakan has assumed power in that country we expect Turkey to change its sinister policies," Barzani concluded.

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Iran: Commentary on Bosnian President's 12 Jul Statement

LD1307191196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, on Friday 12 July, in Sarajevo, accused Serbia and Croatia of sticking to their plan of devastating Bosnia. This is the first time Alija Izetbegovic is thrashing out at presidents of Croatia and Serbia since the signing of the of the Dayton peace accord. Political observers believe statements made by the Bosnian president are in fact a reference to a [words indistinct] first made by Zagreb and Belgrade to disrupt the general elections in Bosnia, for, despite obstacle thrown by Western countries, Serbia, and Croatia against the Muslim party, the victory of the party in Mostar's elections has given rise to the West's concerns about the consolidation of the Muslims and Muslim government of Bosnia's stand.

Political analysts maintain that, in order to evaluate the current developments taking place in Bosnia, one should look at the developments from a wider angle. Then, experts believe, one will come to realize that tough competition is going on among the behind-the-scene directors of the scenes of Bosnia's crisis; something which has actually come to light in Serbia and Croatia, a matter which has been quite obvious during the three-and-a-half years of war in Bosnia. The countries of Serbia and Croatia, which once [words indistinct] to carve Bosnia between themselves, are at present supporting the Bosnian Serbs and Croats, giving them shots in the arm to go ahead with their obstructionism in the way of implementation of the Dayton peace accord.

Belgrade and Zagreb are both enjoying special support of the Western Contact Group. Hence, whenever there is a clash of interests among the members of the group, it will affect political equations of the Bosnian developments through Serbia and Croatia.

European countries and Russia, which have lost the initiative in the Bosnian crisis, are now attempting to direct matters in Bosnia so as to maintain their interests in the region. Hence, political experts believe the Western countries' sensitivity toward the political future of Bosnia has increased since the victory of the Democratic Action Party in Mostar. The West, which once tried to face the Muslim government's entity and the identity of the Bosnian Muslims in the heart of Europe, is now facing too much as waves of Islamism launched by the Bosnians in the victory of the Muslim party at the polls. Therefore, it seems quite natural that hard-line Croats of Mostar not accept the city's general elections after their own defeat at the polls and the Bosnian Serbs, on the other hand, through the West's covert support, are trying by hook or by crook to disrupt the election process in Bosnia.

Iran: Cabinet Approves Signing of Investment Agreement With Croatia

LD1407214696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Cabinet met today. [passage omitted].

The meeting decided to allow the signing of a preliminary agreement between Iran and Croatia that stipulates mutual encouragement and support for the two countries' governments to invest in each others' countries. The ministers also approved the decision to stage the West Asian games in the summer of 1376 [1997] in Tehran, in eight fields, with the participation of 12 regional country members.

The session also decided to allocate the sum of 1 billion rials to the existing funds for research into natural resources related to the work of building Iran's national Horticultural Park. The allocation of 5 billion rials for the purposes of completing semi-completed projects and implementation of projects for construction and prevention of natural disasters in Fars Province, were also approved by the session.

Iran: Daily Examines Motives for Dhahran Explosion

NC1107190596 Tehran SALAM in Persian 29 Jun 96 p 12

[Commentary by Matin Moslem: "Who is Responsible for the Explosion?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Why was the American military base in Saudi Arabia attacked? Who were the attackers and what were their affiliations? These are important questions, but what is more important is the motives behind the attack.

If one could discover the motivation behind such an attack it might be possible to trace those responsible. For many months, Saudi Arabia — as a country that has close ties with the West and especially with the United States — has been in a vulnerable position. Even though these relations are based on a longstanding tradition, they have resulted in constant and vehement criticism of this monarchy. However, it has never been a serious target of urban guerrilla operations nor in such a fragile and vulnerable position. [passage omitted]

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On the one hand, the country is dependent on the presence of U.S. forces for its stability and is considered as a part of the U.S. permanent strategic interests. On the other hand, it is in the throes of military developments and is being deeply threatened by its dissident citizens, experienced in urban guerrilla tactics.

The confrontations that Riyadh recently encountered indicate that the internal dissenters must have formulated their programs many years ago; they are trained and are now operating. Last week's bomb explosion and the identification of a vulnerable site is not an impromptu act nor one that will have a limited fallout.

The explosion at the American military base a few months ago in which a few Americans were killed makes its easier to comprehend the above statements. At that time as well, the Saudi leaders as well as the U.S. officials sought to depict its extent as limited and declared that there was no prospect for such acts being repeated in the future. The Saudis arrested and executed a few people even though it was not certain that they had been responsible for planting the bomb. They had hoped that by doing so the dossier on the event would be closed.

However, the explosion of a few days ago has proved that not only has this not ended, the Riyadh government is facing international repercussions in this new phenomenon in its internal crises, from which it is not easy to extricate itself. What appears important meanwhile is that it has made the situation difficult for the Saudi Government. There is targeting of non-Arab interests (in other words, non-Saudi) in Saudi Arabia that is, U.S. interests and objectives, and now Riyadh is entangled in a moral dilemma in grappling with what it calls combating terrorism.

However, what are the arcane motives behind such baffling actions and who is responsible?

1. It is possible that such a tussle is a harsh outward manifestation of the internal power struggle within the ruling apparatus in Saudi Arabia. It is also possible that at the apex of the power pyramid, there may be a unified opinion on the administration of the country but on the secondary and tertiary levels, this may not be the case. This is especially true at the tertiary level, which is comprised of the educated stratum (the royal technocrats and bureaucrats).

This is the group of those forces that are not very reticent in their criticism of the government's policies. However, without demanding participation in the government apparatus, these groups first of all want greater political participation on the national and parliamentary fronts. Second, they wish to benefit from the interests stemming from power rather than power itself. [passage omitted]

The groups on the second and tertiary levels of the power pyramid do not have any qualms about exposing the present rulers as inept. They are not very inhibited as they feel that the process has to be initiated from somewhere. On one occasion, Kissinger had said that the aftermath of any change in Saudi Arabia's hierarchy should be approached with sagacity and awareness.

2. It is possible that such events may not be linked to the power factions in the ruling party and could be a corollary of the jingoism of this rapidly proliferating stratum in Saudi Arabia. This stratum has the following distinctive characteristics:

A. It is an urban section of society and does not have any empathy for tribal relations or has forgotten about them.

B. It has gained immense advantages and benefits from petrodollars and has reached its optimum as regards its urban and economic development.

C. This stratum's relations with the lower strata are quite cordial and it sees its national growth and political influence as dependent on them to a certain extent. In fact it is seeking its political niche within the matrix of the lower strata of society.

D. A number of individuals of this stratum are from among the ranks of what was known as the well-to-do bourgeoisie and are active in the market mechanism. Hence they have favorable relations with the proletarian strata of society.

In general, as regards the social setup in Saudi Arabia, on the one hand the technocrats employed in industrial and oil centers and on the other the bureaucrats in the administrative apparatus, as well as the bazaaris and the non-industrial bourgeoisie, are all remarkably similar in their social behavior and in fact, complement one another. The general composition of urban society is a combination of a balance of these three sectors. The economic progress of these three groups has inevitably drawn them toward the interests of political power. In fact, regardless of their economic successes they are now seriously seeking political participation. [passage omitted]

3. Perhaps those who caused the explosion could be the groups from the lower strata who are not concerned with political power or economic gains. They do not have any particular status as the composition of the urban population with its contrast of capitalist opulence and backwardness has not yielded any benefits for them

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even though the former is intensely dependent on the latter.

These groups do not see their wishes being acceded to and on the other hand, they feel that they have nothing to lose in embarking on a political struggle. In these groups, religious beliefs and political motivation are far stronger and could prove a suitable breeding ground for spawning such religious movements. Their actions are extemporaneous (as they do not have any organized installations) and hence are not very controllable.

It is possible that the explosion was the work of these groups since due to their employment, they are spread throughout the entire administrative, economic, and military structure of Saudi Arabia. As had been stated, those who caused the explosion were two drivers of a fuel tanker who entered the premises of the base without difficulty and their presence did not raise any suspicions. It is for this reason that it is not improbable that this group could have been responsible.

4. It is also possible that various groups in the Saudi Government itself could have staged the explosion. These groups are part of a vast spectrum of opponents of the regime which include:

A. Groups with nationalist leanings and to some extent the mild leftists who have a base in Europe.

B. Religious groups (Shiite and Sunni) who have a common objective, that is, the toppling of the al-Sa'ud dynasty.

C. Antiregime Shiite groups which have no doubts about the government's harassment and the American objectives that it follows in persecuting them.

D. Armed groups returning from their guerrilla warfare operations abroad and in Afghanistan in particular who are known as the Arab Afghans.

Each of the above groups could be responsible for the explosion. However, what seems certain is that the fourth group of dissidents which has sprouted from the fold of society and is extremely dependent on it could easily carried out such operations as according to Anthony Parsons, an expert on Persian Gulf issues, these groups are the military arm of the lowest stratum of society.

The fact is that the third and fourth groups have a common perspective. The hardworking lower strata of society and the various armed groups, which have been greatly disillusioned by the immense dependence of the Saudi Government on the United States and its servility to Washington, would not hesitate much as regards a physical [as published] confrontation with the U.S. Government and interests. Therefore, they will use every unguarded moment to deal a blow to the interests of a government that is linked to U.S. interests.

These groups are scattered and even present in the U.S. military areas in Dhahran and could have capitalized on one weak point in security and may have done what we witnessed.

In any case, regardless of who staged the explosion, one point is certain and that is that Saudi Arabia is not experiencing very peaceful days. Perhaps these explosions may not directly shake or topple the Saudi regime, but they will certainly place the regime in a position vulnerable to swift changes.

The United States has initiated its strategy for systemic superstructural changes [as published] in the Persian Gulf in a different manner. The timeframe envisaged for such changes is of no significance as compared to the accruing benefits. What is important is that the current retrogressive regimes in the impotent Arab countries of the Persian Gulf cannot ensure the interests of the United States as it wishes. Hence it would be preferable if they were to exit in the manner of the deposed Qatari Amir.

Iran: Foreign Ministry Official on Afghanistan

LD1107222296 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1725 GMT 11 Jul 96

[Interview with 'Ali Khorram, senior advisor to the Iranian foreign minister, by an unidentified correspondent, in studio; date not given — live or recorded; from the "Political Program"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] The Afghan problem seems to have been forgotten for some time, but it once again tops the list of subjects being discussed by the world media? What is the reason?

[Khorram] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Greetings. I must say that during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the issue was an important leading international problem in the context of the bipolar world order and clash between the two superpowers. However, after the Soviet withdrawal followed by the fall of the Soviet Union, the international priorities changed. The Afghan issue lost its international sensitivity and became a regional one. However, in the past year or so and for a number of reason, the issue has returned to the stage and is gradually attracting the attention of global and regional powers. Maybe the emergence of the Taleban in the past year signals the return of the great powers to the Afghan issue.

[Correspondent] How can you categorize the most important elements of instability in Afghanistan?

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[Khorram] The elements of instability belong to two categories: domestic and international. They are both of significance.

[Correspondent] Let us start with the international issues.

[Khorram] It might be correct to present the following analysis: In the past couple of years, the Afghan issue has become the focus of the attention for countries which were previously engaged in their own domestic and international problems, for example, the United States and possibly some other countries. From the fall of the Soviet Union until one year ago the situation was fluid and the American superpower was engaged in other problems. But the regional situation can now take shape and the United States has found the opportunity to deal with it. Some believe that the United States was not concerned with regional crises for a number of years, but it is now putting them back on its agenda. The main reason is possibly the emergence of the newly founded republics in Central Asia and the Caucasus and their unspoiled economy in terms of oil, gas, and other materials. The United States and other international powers want to have a presence in the region and use it. For this end and for the easy transportation of oil and gas to other parts of the world, roads must be open. As you know, there are two main roads. One goes through the Islamic Republic of Iran, to the Persian Gulf and the open seas. This road was made more accessible when the honorable presidents recently inaugurated the Sarakhs-Tedzhen railway. The other road is said to go through Afghanistan and Pakistan, to the Sea of Oman and the Indian Ocean. Commodities produced in Central Asia can be transported to the open sea through these two roads. Countries which have enmity against Iran, or see themselves as rivals, do not really want an active road through Iran. Therefore, some people are trying to establish peace and security in Afghanistan with the hope of connecting Central Asia to the open sea through Afghanistan and Pakistan. This is another important factor.

The first factor was political and the second factor is economic. These two factors have once again attracted international attention to Afghanistan. In this context it is possible to explain the emergence of Taleban and their movement towards the south and the north of the country.

[Correspondent] Regarding internal issues, there are undoubtedly several factors, one of which is the presence of numerous ethnic groups, tribes, and sects, as well as several political parties. Please explain this.

[Khorram] As you said, the internal causes are undoubtedly related to several factors. Some factors stem from the tribal and sectarian background of the various Afghan groups, which existed and unfortunately still exists. It partly stems from factors which have existed in Afghanistan for the past 200 to 300 years, which have resulted in that country being run on a tribal basis. Those traditions have been preserved.

There are other factors that go back to the Soviet occupation, which has left behind its roots, which have today prevented the formation of any form of national unity government.

The various groups, which are in the form of political parties today, that fought to bring down the Soviet Union, have each formed a government. It is difficult for those governments to come together and form a national unity government.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the vestiges of the occupation period have played a very effective role in the fact that, after the fall of Najibollah's government, those Afghan mojahedin groups that strove most to oust the Soviet Union, are not able to come to an agreement.

Those factors, which can cause some form of instability, and the external factors — which fanned the fire of instability and tried by using their influence to prevent Afghanistan's development proper from taking shape — have joined forces and prevented peace from being established in Afghanistan.

[Correspondent] Do you think that the situation continued after the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan and the fall of the Najibollah government? Or were there other factors involved? Is there a difference between the period before and after the mojahedin seized power?

[Khorram] I am sure the factors have changed but there are some roots which have not changed. As I pointed out, religious and ethnic roots continue to exist in Afghanistan. Some of the traditional factors might change if a government of national unity comes to power and establishes a modern system of citizenship. For example, the Afghan parties live as an independent government. They have their own economy. And they are dependent on a closed internal system for their politics and the military. These parties have a presence in Afghanistan. It is very difficult to open up these systems and to make peace between them. It needs a lot of sacrifice, understanding, and national reconciliation. We hope that these will be achieved, God willing.

[Correspondent] Last week the Foreign Ministry held a seminar entitled: Afghanistan and Regional Security. You were the seminar secretary and convener. Was the objective of the seminar finding methods for peace

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settlement in Afghanistan or was the emphasis mainly on regional security?

[Khorram] Of course, we had called the seminar Afghanistan and Regional Security so that we could analyze the factors and effects which we could find in that respect and then present them to the regional states, and so that it would achieve something for the Islamic Republic of Iran and also in order to remind the Afghan leaders and people of those results. However, by an international seminar — this one was the third, following the first one in 1367 [Iranian year beginning 21 March 1988] and the second one in 1368 — we do not have a definite aim of getting a peace plan out of it. Nevertheless, our main aim, and our most important aim, is to pave the way for the Afghan leaders to come over here — just like in the two other seminars — and talks to each other; express their views so that they themselves can understand what the views of the other Afghan leaders are or what other Afghan parties think and, at the same time, we and the rest of the world understand why this problem persists. And then we should try and understand the problem directly from them and help them with its resolution.

That is why, fortunately, Afghan leaders took part in the seminar, understood each other, and expressed points which opened the way for us. We will try, God willing, to take further steps in the future by making use of those points.

[Correspondent] What effects do you think Afghan stability or instability will have on regional security?

[Khorram] Afghan stability definitely affects the whole region. As you know, today that is taken as a principle. If a critical area is created in a region, it will drag the whole region into crisis. In that respect, we see that the Afghan crisis has had effects on the Islamic Republic of Iran as a country. It is certain that it has had the same effects on other countries, such as Pakistan, Turkmenistan, and others and will continue to have those effects.

Stability in Afghanistan has a domestic aspect. There are factors such as narcotics, illiteracy, poverty, the passage and smuggling of arms through that country, and such things. These can affect us. As you know, at the moment it imposes a huge expense on Iran's treasury for the control of narcotics, control of arms, the general poverty existing in Afghanistan — from the point of view of refugees and asylum seekers — and other factors. All these things impose a huge expense on us and cause a part of our construction capital to be expended on them. That is, instead of setting up factories we have to spend money on these affairs. That is one part of this issue. Another part — as I said before — is that if the Afghan scene becomes instable, that instability causes regional and global powers to take root in Afghanistan. Any influence and presence by foreign powers on Iran's borders — according to our principles and our experience — means instability, means danger to the security of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Therefore, we interpret instability in Afghanistan in two ways: the internal one and the external one. Both are counted as security threats to us. That is why we tried to put those threats in black and white in order to show them to the regional people in discussions and exchanges of views. [passage omitted]

Iran: Al-Shar' Visit Weakens Efforts To Disrupt Syrian-Saudi Ties

LD1007132296 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1000 GMT 10 Jul 96

[Unattributed Political Commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' arrived in Riyadh yesterday, at the head of a political-economic delegation, to take part in the sixth [session of the] joint Syrian-[Saudi] Arabian commission, and he met and conferred with his Saudi counterpart, Sa'ud al-Faysal, and other Saudi political and economic officials.

At their two-day meeting, the two sides examined ways of strengthening bilateral cooperation between Syria and [Saudi] Arabia, and, while stressing the need for the implementation of the decisions taken at the Arab summit to confront the expansionist of the Zionist regime, they exchanged views about the recent visit of French President Jacques Chirac to Arabia.

The visit of the Syrian delegation to Arabia is also important from another point of view, because it weakens the joint efforts of the United States and the Zionist regime to disrupt the growing relations between Riyadh and Damascus. It is clear that the success of Syria's regional and international efforts to obtain the support of regional and European countries regarding the return of the occupied Golan territory by the Zionists and the adjustment of the United States' biased stance in favor of the Zionist regime have terrified Tel Aviv's current leaders and their international supporters, and, while placing them in a defensive position, have driven them to put a halt to this process.

In the midst of all this, they are trying — in view of Arabia's special position in the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab world — to curtail relations between Riyadh and Damascus by accusing Syria and

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publicizing the idea that it was involved in the bomb explosion at the American military base in Arabia, in order to prevent the formation of a joint Arab front that would impede the Zionist regime's expansionism.

In the opinion of political analysts, the current relations between Riyadh and Damascus are too strong to be able to be disrupted by a simple and unjustified instrument such as accusations. In fact, the mere holding and continuation of the work of the two countries' joint commission makes it abundantly clear that the two sides wish to improve their relations and that their ties have become institutionalized.

Furthermore, all the countries of the region, even those that felt optimistic about the American peace plan, have become aware, more than ever before, of the security threats posed by the Zionist regime — at least in its nuclear and non-nuclear [as heard] dimension — regarding the environmental dangers of such weapons and see themselves as dutybound to confront the dangers posed by that regime.

Iran: Foreign Ministry on Damascus Declaration's Stance on Israel

LD1407213796 Tehran IRNA in English 2054 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 14, IRNA - Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mahmud Mohammadi, on Sunday [14 July] called the stance of the members of Damascus declaration in the face of the Zionist regime's hostile policies as 'realistic and promising'.

Mohammadi told IRNA that the communique issued by foreign ministers of Damascus declaration is different from that in the past.

He added that the new circumstances which have brought about cooperation between Iran and Arab nations in adopting a common stance against Netanyahu's antagonistic policy are bright.

The spokesman, however, was critical of the foreign ministers' stand regarding their measure in placing the misunderstanding that exists between the United Arab Emirate and the Islamic Republic of Iran in their agenda.

He stressed that it was the most inappropriate timing for raising the misunderstandings that existed among Islamic countries in their agenda since full concentration of Muslim nations was required to focus on the current crisis which has seriously imperiled the interest of regional nations through the conspiracies of the enemies of Islam.

Mohammadi added that instead of making prejudgement in matters related to the irrefutable sovereign right of the Islamic Republic of Iran over the greater and lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, the wisest step of the foreign ministers at Damascus declaration session would have been to encourage the UAE officials to repay Iran's foreign minister's visit to UAE for the followup of the bilateral talks between two neighboring states.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman once again stressed the irrefutable sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran over the three islands, finally announcing that Iran is willing to further pursue cordial talks based on Shaykh Zayid Bin Sultan an-nahyan's letter to President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Iran: Jannati Gives Friday Prayers, Criticizes Netanyahu

LD1207110596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Provicial Network in Persian at 0800 GMT 12 Jult 1996

[Radio Broadcast of Friday Prayers delivered by Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati at Tehran University, 0800 GMT — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Ayatollah Jannati devotes the first sermon to the subject of, what he calls, economic piety. In this sermon he praises the virtues of the first Shi'i imam, 'Ali, and how careful he was as a caliph of the Muslims not to waste public assets. On the same subject, he says:

"One of the objectives of Islamicizing universities is to train the young generation to follow 'Ali's example. That is, when the students complete their education and find jobs, when they are in charge of public assets, they do not abuse their authority, and they make certain that not even a penny of the public purse is wasted."

Further on this subject he says: "A report says that up to 50,000 people die in Iran annually from the damage caused by smoking cigarettes. In addition, 7,300 billion rials per year is wasted on purchasing cigarettes. Can you imagine how many schools we could build with this money? We also have to spend a lot of money to treat the smokers who fall ill as a result of their habit."

The first sermon ends at 0820 GMT and is immediately followed by the second sermon.

In the second sermon, Ayatollah Jannati pays tribute to the Prophet Muhammad and the eighth Shi'i imam, Reza, whose demise anniversary will be marked simultaneously on 18 July this year.

Reviewing Prophet Muhammad's life and history of the early Islamic era, he describes various battles of the period, named jihad. On this issue he says:

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"When the Prophet was in his sick bed, the army of Islam was dispatched to fight the biggest superpower of the era, that is, the Roman empire. Whenever the prophet felt slightly better, he would ask about the fate of Usama bin Zayd bin Harithah, the Prophet Muhammad's commander, and his army. He would curse anyone who disobeyed orders of Usama's division. He wanted volunteers to join this division and fight the enemy. No one was allowed any excuses in order to avoid joining the division. We should maintain such an attitude, too.

"Islam is a charter with many dimensions, including worship, morality, kindness to other people, care of the weak and the meek, helping family members around the house, and at the same time jihad for the sake of God's path.

"The enemy will not retreat, even if we were to retreat. You can see what they are doing now. You can see what this crazy man, who has recently become the prime minister of Israel, is doing. You can see his attitude. You can also see how others, whose status is well above his, support this man. Well, they are mobilizing their armies against Islam.

"Today, they keep raising the issues of Iran because it is the only major power which is confronting them, praise be to God. However, if one day they stop being concerned about Iran — incidentally such a day will never come, God willing, and this country will always remain a source of worry and discomfort for the tyrants and oppressors — then they would seek other countries to target them. They can swallow these other countries like a morsel. Even now they are bullying these countries. And these countries have to put up with the bullying. Thanks to this situation, we must not forget jihad for God's path. We must struggle by every means possible to please God. God is with us and will assist us. I have no doubt if we continue along the path chosen by the late imam and pursued by the esteemed leader of the Islamic revolution, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, God will definitely assist us."

Jannati briefly touches on the subject of enjoining virtue and prohibiting vice and says: "I would like to stress that the issue of enjoining virtue and prohibiting vice is a branch of jihad. There are other forms of jihad, too. Jihad against the enemy and jihad against ignorance are two other examples. The ignorant people are not our enemies, but they have been misled by the satan. They are misled by carnal desires. Young boys and girls may become obsessed with carnal desires. Although they are believers, that is, they believe in God, the Prophet, and all the imams, they may resort to some forbidden deeds, not realizing that such deeds contradict the religion. We must guide these people. In the first place we advise them. This is an obligation of all Muslims. This is a duty similar to prayers and fasting."

Pakistan

Pakistan: Islamabad Reportedly Considering Change in Afghan Policy

LD1307185696 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan's government is considering a change in its policy toward Afghanistan.

According to international news agencies, the government of Pakistan has decided to set up a commission to review its Afghan policy. The commission will be assigned to determine the government's position in the light of the new policy.

The report says that in the past, the government of Pakistan followed different policies in relation to the Afghan problem. However, it had now agreed to follow a common policy in this regard. The report adds that Pakistan's government departments have admitted that mistakes were made when Afghan policy was being devised, and relations between the neighboring countries suffered as a result of irresponsible talk by government officials. Two weeks ago, a long discussion was held between (?organizer) of Afghan affairs and the Pakistani authorities concerning the reconstruction of Chaman-Torghodi highway.

Pakistan: Major Party Representatives Urge More Ties With Kabul

BK1507050096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 15 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Representatives of two major parties in the country have called for strengthening and consolidating relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan for the benefit of the people of the two countries. They briefed the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs in Islamabad yesterday on the outcome of their visit to Kabul, where they participated on behalf of their respective political parties in the oath-taking ceremony of Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar as the prime minister of Afghanistan. Senator Syed Masud Kauser of Pakistan People's Party and Akram Zaki of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz group also held separate meetings with Afghan leaders and called for greater diplomatic activities to find a balanced approach to the Afghan situation. They informed the members of the standing committee that Afghan leaders hold the people of Pakistan in high esteem and value the support

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extended by the Pakistani nation in their long struggle against foreign aggression. The standing committee meeting, chaired by Senator Sartaj Aziz, decided unanimously to continue its deliberations on foreign policy options on Afghanistan.

Pakistan: Bhutto Offers 'Dialogue' to Opposition To Resolve Issues

BK1407094796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has again invited the opposition for a meaningful dialogue on national issues and for evolving a working relationship for the well-being of the people. Addressing a press conference in Lahore last evening, she regretted that despite several sincere offers for dialogue, the leader of the opposition never responded positively. She emphasized that a path of confrontation would lead the country nowhere.

The prime minister said the demand for the removal of her government by the opposition is unjustified and holds no ground. She said the elections were held three years ago under an interim government in a free and fair manner, and the people voted the Pakistan Democratic Front into power. It would be an insult to the people's mandate to demand removal of the government.

The prime minister said that her government holds the judiciary in high esteem and there is no confrontation between the government and the judiciary. She categorically rejected the opposition's demand for midterm polls, and said her government will complete its tenure. She ruled out any change in the Punjab government until the next general elections.

The prime minister also briefed newsmen about various clauses of the Punjab local bodies bill and said that this will bring a qualitative change in the social-political set up of the province. She said through this bill, the panchayat [village council] system will be introduced in rural areas for solving the problems of the people at their doorsteps. She said that Punjab local bodies elections will be held this September.

Benazir Bhutto said that the realistic economic policy of the present government has increased investment opportunities manifold and during the last three years more than $3 billion have been invested in Pakistan. She said the government signed memorandums of understanding of $22 billion with different countries. She said the government is committed to uplifting socioeconomic conditions of the people and is competing in various developments projects in all four provinces, including provision of clean drinking water, fast communication means, establishment of schools and basic health units.

The prime minister said various steps are being taken to control price hikes. Recounting various steps taken by the government to raise the literacy rate, she said that in the next five years, 50,000 primary schools will be established throughout the country. She said that the government is committed to better employment opportunities through concrete planning.

Pakistan: Bhutto Welcomes 'Third-Party Mediation' in Kashmir

BK1307161696 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said Pakistan will welcome third party mediation on Kashmir for an early resolution of this longstanding issue.

Addressing a news conference in Lahore this evening, she said that various issues between Pakistan and India, including Rann of Kutch and Indus water treaty, were peacefully solve through third-party mediation.

The prime minister said the people of occupied Kashmir have rejected the election drama of Indian authorities and the people of Kashmir will not compromise on any other option, except their right of self-determination and plebiscite. She said that India will not succeed in suppressing the movement launched by the Kashmiri people through deployment of more than 600,000 troops. The prime minister said that Indian troops are indulging in grave human rights violations in occupied Kashmir. She added that if the international community wants world peace, it should adopt a uniform policy to achieve this aim because current human rights standards are indivisible. Benazir Bhutto said the All Parties Hurriyat Conference has rejected the so-called elections in occupied Kashmir. She said the Indian Government did not allow the international media to witness the process of election drama in occupied Kashmir. On the other hand, Azad Kahsmir elections were held in peaceful atmosphere in free and fair manner.

The prime minister said India is increasing its military might by massing strategic weapons and producing various types of missiles, including Prithvi and Agni missiles, which poses a threat to the entire region. She said Pakistan has proposed many times ending the missile race in the region, but unfortunately India has not accepted Pakistan's proposal of a zero-missile zone.

Answering a question, Benazir Bhutto said during her meeting with the American ambassador in Lahore yesterday, various matters, including international issues and bilateral relations, were discussed.

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Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Parliament Approves Extension of State of Emergency

BK1207123596 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Parliament approves another one month extension to the emergency by a majority of 45 votes yesterday. One hundred and twenty MP's supported the motion while 75 opposed it.

Winding up the debate, General Anuruddha Ratwatte [deputy defense minister] observed that the government exercised control over the entire Jaffna peninsula despite sporadic terrorist attacks. Unlike during the previous regime, the people of the North supported the government. The minister said that the government plans to eliminate terrorism, something which the UNP [United National Party] failed to do for over 13 years.

Sri Lanka: Troops Resume Advance in New Seda Pahara Operation

BK1307123096 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Troops have resumed their advance further southwards in Operation Seda Pahara. According to the Operational Headquarters of the Defense Ministry, the advancing troops confronted a group of terrorists in Sirimachachi yesterday, killing two terrorists and injuring two. The troops recovered one T-56 weapon from the scene of the incident. The terrorists resisted the advancing troops in Sampan Kulam. The troops overcame tough terrorist resistance with the support of artillery and mortar fire. Terrorist transmissions monitored revealed that three Tigers were killed and a large number was injured due to the artillery fire. Further transmissions revealed that the terrorists had taken their casualties towards the Angoda Villu jungle. A near-strike was carried out in the Angoda Villu area to destroy the fleeing terrorists. One soldier was injured during the day's operation and admitted to the Batticaloa Hospital.

The Operational Headquarters also reported two more incidents. In one incident in the Walikamam division, a security forces vehicle was ambushed by a group of terrorists. Two security forces personnel were killed. Reinforcements were rushed to the location and retaliated effectively, forcing the terrorists to flee the area. In the other incident, the troops recovered 100 hand grenades and 10 into [as heard] 60 mortar shell from the Urumpirai area in the Walikamam division. They were able to do so on information provided by a civilian.

Sri Lanka: Police Arrest LTTE 'Suicide Bomber,' Seize Explosives

BK1307091496 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 13 Jul 96

[Report by Sarath Malasekera — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The arrest of a Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) suicide bomber by the Wellawatte police division, Colombo 6, in the early hours of Friday, July 12 helped avert what could have been a grave disaster in the city of Colombo, said Colombo DIG [Deputy Inspector General] D.M.T.B. Dissanayake on Friday at a special press briefing in Colombo.

Following the arrest of a 21-year-old LTTE suicide bomber and seven others including a woman and child police were able to recover about 100 kilos of explosives, a T-56, a 9 mm rifle, with 100 rounds ammunition, and another 50 rounds of ammunition, DIG Dissanayake said.

The T-56 automatic assault rifle was found inside a S-Lon pipe at the Wellawatte house.

Several computers, handphones, a radio, video cassette recorders, special set of writing pens, a Hi Ace van and three motor cycles were also recovered from the Wellawatta house.

The explosives were packed into eight containers, rigged with small batteries and switches to be mounted in a van for bombing.

DIG Dissanayake said that the suicide bomber was arrested at a Bambalapitiya police check point on suspicion by a sergeant and four police constables who were on duty. After a lengthy interrogation, a police search party visited his lodgings at Wellawatte and recovered the explosives hidden in a room of the luxury house.

The suicide bomber had Rs. [rupees] 13,000 in his possession at the time of his arrest and out of that money the suicide bomber had offered Rs. 2,000 to the policemen at the check point.

According to investigations, the owner of the house in which the explosives were recovered lives in the Middle-East. Only his wife, child and several other relations were living at the residence at Wellawatte, police said.

The DIG said that the investigations so far revealed that the suicide bomber now in custody was a member of the LTTE suicide squad called 'Black Tigers'.

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"We believe it is an LTTE suicide bomb squad that brought the explosives to be used in a suicide mission," DIG Dissanayake said, adding there may be more of these explosives in the city. "We are on alert."

Police have now sealed the lodgings in the Wellawatte police division.

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